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Statutory Committee ruling to High Court

Branches get PR guidance and funds

A new Bill for pharmacy?

'Private' fees up by 10pc

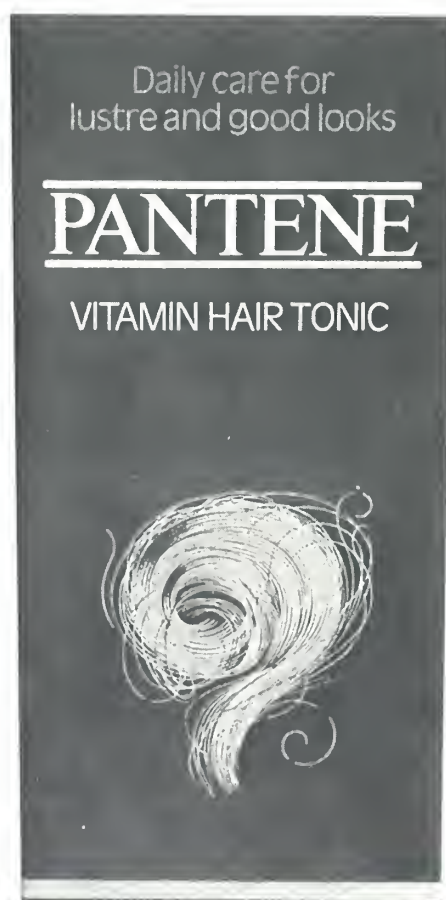
Encouragement for practice research

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CONTENTS

- 895 Comment—D-I-Y PR
—Danger of silence
- 896 Chemists' concern over Budget changes
- 897 Hills Pharmaceuticals join Numark
- 898 Society's local PR gets structure and funds
- 899 People; deaths
- 899 The Xrayser column—Old Mother Hubbard
- 901 Counterpoints
- 902 Prescription specialities
- 912 A way of identifying management potential
- 914 Business matters
- 916 A new Pharmacy Bill?
- 921 A computer in the pharmacy
- 933 Equipment
- 935 Society tests Statutory Committee ruling
- 939 Letters; coming events
- 940 Searle acquire new beta-blocker rights
- 940 Appointments; market news
- 941 Classified advertisements

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D-I-Y PR

For years the profession of pharmacy has been demanding a better "image". For years the politicians and the expert appointees of the Pharmaceutical Society and other organisations have been saying: "It's up to you, the membership—you create your own image by the way you practise."

Now the two are being brought together, because the Society's director of public relations, Mr Philip Paul, has produced a manual of advice on how pharmacists may set about positive public relations locally with some hope of success (p898). He has also proposed a formal structure of branch PROs and regional "communications" officers, each with clearly defined responsibilities to ensure they don't get under each other's (or headquarters') feet. And he has won from Council some cash, a minimum of £50 per branch for one experimental year, to ensure that Press briefings and the like are not dismissed through lack of finance.

But the framework is nothing without the people, and Mr Paul's "job descriptions" are demanding. If they are to be put into effect the office holders must show both aptitude and dedication—it is not a role that can be left to an also-ran in branch elections. Even if the branches can bring forth the willing and able volunteers, there will be need for active backing from all local pharmacists. In effect, Mr Paul has challenged the profession to show that it wants what it says it wants badly enough to do something practical to achieve it. It is a new approach in pharmacy and we hope the challenge will be accepted. Mr Paul can then reasonably be asked to keep his part of the bargain and build on the foundations.

Danger of silence

The issue raised by Mr Stanley Blum last week (see Letters, p 883) concerning NHS prescription underpayments for some London contractors during November points to a number of problems in the handling of the situation. When *C&D* tried to clarify the facts it became clear that there was some truth, but not whole truth, in the many rumours being circulated. Unfortunately the official bodies are unwilling at the moment to issue "on the record" statements.

It would be regrettable if chemist contractors were to lose faith in the Prescription Pricing Authority because of an apparently one-off breakdown in the system. Surely this is a case for positive public relations—all chemists should be told the true situation as soon as possible to dispel the rumours and to reassure them that their pricing is not affected.

Which brings us to another issue. Why did all contractors not spot the discrepancies? It would seem the fault in delay of reimbursement can be laid at the doors of both sides and must be seen as a warning to all contractors to check accurately their invoices.

Concern over some Budget changes

The Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee and the National Pharmaceutical Association are both concerned about the increase in prescription charges to 45p, announced in this week's Budget. NPA has reservations about the VAT increases to 15 per cent.

The charges go up on July 16 and the exemptions are unchanged. The move is expected to bring in £40 million extra revenue and no cuts in the health services are planned. The "season ticket" will go up to £8 a year, £4.60 for six months, also from July 16.

Taxing the sick

PSNC says it is regrettable that the Government has taxed the sick rather than the fit and that pharmacists continue as unpaid tax gatherers. Contractors are expected to be no better off—indeed with the reductions in capital employed because of higher cash in hand from raised prescription charges an average contractor could be £150 per year worse off. Prescription numbers are also expected to fall as they have done when charges have been raised in the past, although the effect is difficult to predict. The PSNC said the independent assessment panel would be aware of the higher prescription charges.

Single rate welcomed

The NPA is unhappy about the increase in VAT rates but realises the reduction in personal taxation has to be paid for. The Association welcomes the direct tax reductions and is delighted at the return to a single positive VAT rate—something it has been pressing for since the move away from it. NPA says the immediate effect of an increase in VAT will result in a slight benefit to the retail pharmacist's cash flow but will be offset by payment of VAT on NHS supplies without collection on dispensing.

NPA members will be able to use the present NPA VAT stationery but will only need to complete one column for positive rate. NPA is looking into the ways in which it is assumed pharmacists will be able to split the June accounts into two parts for VAT purposes in the light of advice to be published by Customs and Excise. NPA is pleased about the writing off of deferred tax liability resulting from increased stock values in recent years.

Account from June 18

From June 18, traders registered for VAT should account for tax at the new rate of 15 per cent on all supplies of goods and services which have previously been chargeable at 8 per cent or 12½ per cent. However the rules to be followed

on a change of rate have been modified (see below). The increase in VAT will apply to existing stocks held by registered traders who, unless a contract provides otherwise, will be entitled to pass it on to their customers.

The VAT fraction to be used in calculating VAT at 15 per cent from tax-inclusive prices is 3/23rds. Retailers using any of the special retail schemes must follow the rules set out in the existing supplement to notice no 727 for the scheme which they are using. Customs and Excise Notice No 735, which will be available at local VAT offices, incorporates a ready reckoner for calculating VAT at 3/23rds. All the present retail schemes will remain available, though some traders will be able to switch to simpler schemes. It is estimated that these changes will result in an increase in revenue of about £4.175m in a full year and about £2.035 in 1979-80.

Modification of rules

The normal rule when a rate of VAT is changed is that the rate of tax to be charged is that in force at the tax point—frequently the date of invoice as opposed to the date of supply. However, the rule is modified on this occasion to enable traders registered for VAT to account for tax at the old 8 per cent or 12½ per cent rates, as appropriate, on supplies made before June 18, 1979, even where the tax point would normally occur after that date. Guidance on the effect and application of this modification is given in Customs and Excise leaflet no 716/1/79 which will be available at local VAT offices.

To ensure that no charges on telephone bills for calls made before June 18 carry the increased rate of VAT, the new 15 per cent rate will not be applied to bills issued before next November.

Chemists' questions

Based on questions reaching NPA on Wednesday, members are advised that it is not enough legally to place a notice of the increased rate on the till—the notice must be where goods are displayed and preferably goods should be repriced. There is no obligation to increase prices on June 18—though retailers must account to Customs and Excise for the higher rate from that date. Chemists will need to keep two accounts for script changes during July so that the amount at each rate can be declared on VAT returns.

Boots hold till July

Boots told *C&D* on Wednesday that they will be holding their prices until July 2 in order to affect an orderly changeover

C&D Price Service

This issue of *C&D* includes a conversion chart for 8 per cent to 15 per cent and 12½ per cent to 15 per cent VAT rate. The July Price List will show retail prices calculated on the basis of the new rates of VAT. This week's Price Supplement and Counterpoints prices show current rates of VAT.

The 12½ per cent rate applies to the electrically-operated domestic appliances such as bed warmers, blankets, curling tongs, and heaters, facial saunas, haircurlers and rollers, hair cutters and trimmers, hair dryers and accessories, infra-red "health" and ultra-violet lamps, massage equipment, razors, electric toothbrushes; binoculars and photographic equipment excluding films, paper, chemicals, disposable flash bulbs, albums, slide boxes.

—which could not be completed by June 18.

The Department of Trade is consulting trade interests immediately with a view to amending the Food (Prohibition of Repricing) Order 1978 to allow retailers to reprice certain foods and drinks by the amount of the VAT increase.

VAT still delayed?

Chemists have been complaining that HM Customs and Excise have not completed VAT repayments as suggested last week in a C&E announcement (*C&D*, p856). A spokesman for C&E told *C&D* on Tuesday that the February claims have been paid and that March claim forms were issued on June 1, April and June 8 and May forms were due to be sent out around June 15. When the claim forms are returned to C&E repayments would be expected within a few days. Thus processing is expected to be up-to-date by the end of June. June claim forms will be sent out by July 6.

Meanwhile, the increased on-account advance NHS prescription payments negotiated by the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee are continuing at 96 per cent. At the beginning of July that level will be paid for June prescriptions. Should the repayments not be up-to-date by mid-July PSNC will seek a 6 per cent increase to 102 per cent for July prescriptions payable at the beginning of August.

A Westons goes

Mr J. M. Whittam, formerly sales director of Westons before being made redundant, has acquired the Westons' branch at Gospel Lane, Birmingham. This follows reports of Westons' branches being sold to R. Gordon Drummond and Lloyds Chemists—other sales are understood to be currently the subject of negotiations.

Hills join Numark

Hills Pharmaceuticals Ltd have become shareholders in Independent Chemists Marketing Ltd and take over the servicing on NPA distribution and Numark development in parts of Lancashire, Merseyside, and parts of Cheshire and Staffordshire previously allocated to the H. B. Dorling Ltd depot at Whitefield, Manchester.

H. B. Dorling Ltd, a subsidiary of the Macarthy's group, will continue to operate the Numark franchise based on the Greater Manchester area. The changes will be phased in from July and all NPA members affected by the change of wholesale services will be advised directly by letter.

"We are contracting our Numark franchise in order to concentrate our Manchester depot resources on a smaller area and to provide a fully comprehensive service to all NPA members within our reduced franchise area," said Mr David Savory, a director of H. B. Dorling Ltd and vice-chairman of ICML.

Hills Pharmaceuticals Ltd have their head office in Burnley, chemist warehouse depots in Warrington, Huddersfield (Henry Sykes Ltd) and Birmingham (A.S. Price Ltd), and a manufacturing unit at Nelson, Lancs.

Pledge on MAPs minimum prices

Mr Gordon Borrie, director general of fair trading, said last week he would use all his powers to prevent manufacturers from imposing minimum selling prices on retailers.

He told the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux that twice in the past eight months he had reminded major manufacturers of the Resale Prices Act 1976 provisions. The manufacturers—Philips Industries and Hotpoint Ltd—had agreed to keep their resale prices policies within the law.

"These are interesting examples of how, in exercising my powers, I can help the consumer and—which is just as important—ensure that shopkeepers, large and small, are not being pressurised by their suppliers to keep up prices. The retailer's freedom to offer goods to the public at prices he thinks proper is protected by law, and I will use the law to protect that right."

Colitis warning

A warning about antibiotic-induced colitis has been issued by the Committee on Safety of Medicines. In the period 1964-1978 the CSM has received 174 reports of colitis attributed to antibiotics and the committee noted that more than 80 per cent of these cases have been treated with clindamycin or lincomycin. However these two drugs account for



only 1 per cent of the antibiotic market.

The warning notice (Adverse Reaction Series No 17) says that there is evidence that the antibiotics are often being used for minor indications although they should be reserved for serious or life-threatening conditions. Copies of the warning have been sent to all practising doctors, dentists and pharmacists in the United Kingdom.

Carrier did not infringe patent

British Airways were cleared in the High Court in London last week of contravening the Patents Act by acting as carriers and warehousemen of an imported drug, cimetidine, which infringed a UK patent. Mr Justice Oliver said he was "unpersuaded" that carrying and warehousing constituted an infringement within the meaning of section 60 of the Patents Act 1977.

The judge dismissed a patent infringement action brought by Smith Kline & French Laboratories Ltd against British Airways Board, who were awarded costs. Smith Kline & French Ltd were given judgment with costs on its claims against R. D. Harbottle (Mercantile) Ltd, of Barking, Essex, who imported the infringing drug destined for Nigeria, and Docpharm Srl, of Monza, Italy, who supplied and shipped it by British Airways.

Harbottles were ordered to pay storage charges and custom dues incurred by British Airways since the infringing drug arrived in the UK from Italy last September. The infringing drug was said to have been of Korean origin.

Scottish Executive election result

There are two new faces on the Pharmaceutical Society's Scottish Executive: John Brodie and John Irvine. The only retiring member not to be re-elected was George Burness. The results of the election, declared on Wednesday, are as follows (voting figures in parenthesis): Alexander Cowan, Bannockburn (396) Robert Arthur Brodie, Balerno (367) Sheila Helen Paterson, Aberdeen (366) James Hay Henderson, Dunfermline (357) James Stewart, Glasgow (346) John Irvine, Largs (306)

Not elected: George Burness (282), Henry Holme (257), Ian Mullen (229), Geoffrey Vernon (215). Of the 821 voting papers returned (2834 issued) 813 were counted as valid.

Oradexon recall

Due to the discovery of particulate matter in a number of the above vials Organon Laboratories Ltd are recalling batch nos A5750A, Z5750A and Z5750B of Oradexon—Organon 2ml vials 4mg/ml. Pharmacists are asked to return any stocks of the above batches (distributed between November 1978 and March 1979) to their usual wholesaler.

As C&D went to press it was predicted that industrial action at the Post Office might delay delivery of this week's issue by at least 24 hours.

Society's local PR gets structure—and funds

Pharmaceutical Society branches and regions are to receive direct finance to support the activities of branch public relations officers and regional communications officers—two new designations recommended by the Society's recently-appointed director of public relations, Mr Philip Paul.

Mr Paul's "guidelines" on public relations are set out in a paper being sent to branch and regional secretaries this week, having been with Council since March but held up on the question of funding. It has now been agreed that the grants will be 15 per cent of the grant given for other purposes, with a minimum of £50, the money being expendable only for PR purposes. The first cheques are being sent out with the paper, but the grant is only for a one-year trial period and "policy thereafter will be determined very largely by the use branches and regions make use of this opportunity."

PR objectives

In the paper, Mr Paul defines the objectives of branch and regional public relations as follows:

- To use every opportunity to increase public and official knowledge and appreciation of the functions and views of the profession.
- To seek to improve recognition of the pharmacist as a professional practitioner of ability and integrity, providing specialised and essential services.
- To encourage pharmacists to improve, wherever possible, the quality of their services and to regard themselves as ambassadors of the profession.
- To promote public understanding of the existence and purposes of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain.
- To advance mutual understanding between pharmacists and the members of inter-related professions, with the aim of creating smooth and effective working partnerships.
- To maintain close liaison with the local representatives of other pharmaceutical organisations, for the purpose of producing cohesive approaches to topical issues.

Mr Paul's recommendations for new job descriptions, accepted by Council, involve the renaming of the branch Press officer as public relations officer. A 13-point duty plan makes the PROs responsible for two-way communications with the director and making local contacts. They should also seek to develop "PR consciousness" among branch members and identify those willing and able to act as spokesman on local radio and television, or to write articles for publication. PROs would also be expected to initiate a programme of talks to local organisations to "disseminate knowledge of pharmaceutical responsibilities, specialisms and status."

The appointment of regional Press officers in 1978 was, according to Mr Paul, a mistake since there has been confusion over titles, functions and division of duties between the regional and branch officers. Regional appointees, he contends, should adopt an "organisational stance" related to the needs of the media. Accordingly, they should be designated "regional communications officers." Among their functions will be action on short and long-term projects and co-ordinating the efforts of branch PROs—for whom they may also have to deputise.

Dealing with media

Mr Paul's paper also gives some detailed guidance to both officers on how to deal with the media—their requirements and what will and will not impress the journalist. But it is for matters of principle that the director saves his most forthright comments.

Public relations, he says, should not be confused with publicity—the latter is one of the communications tools of the former. "While the central public relations function on behalf of the Pharmaceutical Society has necessarily to be discharged at headquarters, branch and regional efforts are of no less consequence. A cohesive nationwide campaign, carried out via the provincial Press, is as influential in totality as anything achievable through Fleet Street. Moreover, in purely functional terms, there is no way in which a central PR unit can provide comprehensive coverage for all the localised communications outlets; in these areas the parochial flavour of news stories is of prime importance. It is here that the efforts of branch PROs can reap rich rewards."

Public relations cannot be left simply to the officers, however, and Mr Paul stresses "whether they are aware of it or

not (and, sadly, some are not) and whether they like it or not, every individual practitioner is a PRO on behalf of everyone pursuing his, or her, calling. Their appearance, performance, demeanour and behaviour are the ingredients from which all who come into contact with them compose overall impressions and form composite opinions of their profession. Once conceived, such views are not easily changed.

"And, contrary to the belief that, surprisingly, persists in some of the top boardrooms in the land, the PRO has no magic wand or mystic formula by means of which he can transform the mediocre into the marvellous. A sound product is the keystone of public relations; without it the fabric will always be deficient and vulnerable."

In that context, Mr Paul notes that some pharmacists are the victims of a deep-seated inner conflict, in which "the introversion induced by proper professional conduct does battle with a desire for greater public prominence." Given a reasoned approach, he adds, the two elements are not permanently irreconcilable.

Organisational fragmentation

A hazard to be overcome is what Mr Paul describes as the profession's prevailing "organisational fragmentation". It will require close PR consultations between the organisations to ensure that potential conflicts of interest do not result in contradictory public statements.

A final "fundamental PR truth" from Mr Paul's paper states that "good internal relations are the stepping stone to successful external communications. Unless the former are healthy, the latter will be ineffectual. A survey of those professions which enjoy high ratings in the public eye shows that they possess a major asset in common—broad unity and concord among their members. Internal acrimony and asperity are not only a waste of time and energy which could be devoted to more constructive pursuits; they are the woodworm and dry rot which destroy the planks of the PR platform." (Comment, p895.)

Mr Leslie Calvert (centre, right) winner of the Unichem Trophy, for the second consecutive year being presented with the Trophy by Mr Ken Rutter, a non-executive director of Unichem. Mr David Mitchell (right) was runner up and Mr Michael Bligh won third prize



by Xrayser

Mr David Sharpe, FPS, who was elected president of the Pharmaceutical Society last week, (*C&D*, p857) is said to have made pharmaceutical history. It is the first time that the same individual has held the offices of Society's president and chairman of the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee.

A liveryman of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries and a freeman of the City of London, Mr Sharpe qualified as a pharmacist in 1957. He was elected to the Society's Council in 1967 and became vice-president last year. He is a former chairman—the youngest in the organisation's half-century history—of the National Pharmaceutical Association.

Mr Sharpe is managing director of Cory Brothers, a company operating a pharmacy in East Finchley, north London, and a surgical equipment business. On behalf of Cory Brothers, Mr Sharpe holds the Royal Warrant for the supply of surgical equipment to HM the Queen. In accepting the Society's presidency, Mr Sharpe pledged himself to "pursue with the utmost energy the task of furthering the status and well-being of the pharmaceutical profession."

Mr Edgar A. Hebron, MBE, FPS, was guest of honour at an unusual gathering in Chelmsford, Essex, last week. The event was a reception given by Mr S. L. Pabari, BSc(Pharm), MPS, as a "thank-you" for the help and encouragement Mr Hebron had provided Mr Pabari when he first considered entering pharmacy—and for guidance in professional and business matters since then. The reception was attended by some 40 guests, including members of the pharmaceutical and other professions.

Mr Hebron was in business at New Ferry, Cheshire, for 32 years until retirement in 1977. He was made an MBE in 1960 for public services and appointed a magistrate in the same year; in 1969 he was made a Fellow of the Pharmaceutical Society. Having been mayor of Bebington in 1970-71, Mr Hebron was followed in the office by his wife—the only time that has occurred in municipal boroughs, it is believed. Chairman of Cheshire LPC for 21 years, and a member of the RHA for four years, Mr Hebron is now chairman of Wirral Community Health Council.

The Ulster Chemists' Bowling Association held their annual bowling competition at Shaftesbury Bowling Green, Belfast, on May 30. The results were: Jack Caldwell Rose Bowl—T. Magowan (first), T. I. O'Rourke (second), C. S. Ritchie (third). Sterling Winthrop Trophy—S. Cohen (first), J. Scott (second), C. Hewitt (third). The next bowling event will be for the Sidney Magowan Memorial Cup and other prizes on August 29 at Ewatts Bowling Green, Somerdale Park, Belfast.

Mr Harold G. Moss, OBE, FPS, and his wife, Marjorie, celebrated their golden wedding on June 15.

Old Mother Hubbard

*Old Mother Hubbard went to the cupboard
To get her poor patient a fix,
But when she got there, the wall, it was bare
And so the poor patient got nix.*

Or so the nursery rhyme would have us believe. I seem to remember that some of these old rhymes originated as satirical comment on events and people of times before ours, verses which so tickled folk minds that they lingered long after the people concerned had passed from memory. But I digress, for all this is leading up to the cupboards which, almost by definition, are crammed full of goodies, labelled clearly what they are, and only lack a carrying handle to make their removal from our pharmacies an act of complete ease for anyone so inclined.

In case you haven't guessed, I'm talking about those pathetic tin boxes which nearly all of us had to buy for the "secure" storage of CDs. We forked out our £50 or so, grumbling all the while at the credulity of "them" (the Home Office?) for thinking that such a lightweight affair—which the proverbial child of eight, armed of course with a small tyre lever, could open in a jiffy and have off the wall in a trice—was the proper way to store Controlled Drugs. But we learn, five years on, that the police had thought they would be more substantial than they turned out to be, and now admit they offer little or no resistance to the determined intruder. What's more, they are going to meet the Home Office drugs branch to make "one or two suggestions!" Isn't that marvellous? It's ironic that once the cupboards were installed the official mind was completely satisfied but that (as I understand it) those pharmacists who were so nonconformist as to install a real safe, have to make an annual application to continue the use of this non-standard installation and, believe it or not, suffer a physical inspection by a police officer to make sure it is still in the same place!

Twenty-five per cent

Back dated to April 1, a 25 per cent increase in NHS remuneration has been granted. But not to us, just to our friends, so much better organised than we, the doctors and dentists. It is interesting to see that it will bring the average GP an income of a mere £12,000, in addition to which he will get a tenner a week for contraceptive services. I particularly liked the subtle ploy by the doctors' negotiators who suggested that "pending the outcome of discussions . . . the remuneration from dispensing and on-cost combined should be increased by the same amount as would apply to the gross income per practitioner from all fees and allowances." The nerve of it! I really admire it. However, after a lot more words, you will be reassured to learn that they are only going to get a 25 per cent increase in their fees, poor things. I'm definitely going to become a doctor. It's the only way to make money from dispensing.

Deaths

Hartnell: Norman Hartnell, dress designer to the Queen. His perfume *In love* is made and marketed by Thomas Christy Ltd. He worked closely with them on the design of the packages, especially the Christmas coffrets.

Inkster: Andrew Inkster, former managing director of Ingasetter Ltd, Banchoory. Mr Inkster, who qualified in 1921 retired to his native Shetland eight years ago. It was his ambition to find a tree

that would grow in the windswept islands and to this end planted many saplings in a nursery in his garden, noting which survived the climate.

Stafford: Mr C. D. W. Stafford on April 15. Mr Stafford, who qualified in 1931, was president of the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry 1965-67. He was then elected an honorary member. In 1964 Mr Stafford was appointed executive vice-chairman of the Beecham Group, an office he held until he retired in 1972.

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Ibcol Disinfectant	12 x 300ml	£1.90
Shield Toilet Soap (P / M 15p)	12 x large	£1.39
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COUNTERPOINTS

Beecham give Body Mist a 25 pc boost

Beecham Toiletries are promoting Body Mist anti-perspirant deodorant with special extra-value aerosols and roll-ons in all four fragrances, which offer 25 per cent more Body Mist for the same prices as the related normal sizes.

Body Mist is well-established as one of the UK's leading anti-perspirant deodorants, specially designed for women in a market currently valued at £39 million at retail selling prices. "Body Mist has achieved its position because women find it lives up to its '3-way protection' claim," says Roger Holden, Beecham's marketing manager for deodorants. "All you need do is display these attractive extra-value packs prominently and they'll sell themselves," he added.

Samples of 2nd Debut, offered through small-sized advertisements in women's magazines and national Press, have been applied for by consumers at the rate of more than 1,000 a week. On the basis of this encouraging response, Beecham have now increased 2nd Debut's advertising frequency for the year to more than 350 spaces in the same media. Consequently stockists can confidently



expect 2nd Debut sales to go on growing, says the company. Since 1977, when Beecham Proprietaries took over responsibility for 2nd Debut in the UK, its sales have risen by more than a third, making it worth more than £500,000 at *rsp.* Beecham Proprietaries, Beecham House, Great West Road, Brentford, Middlesex TW8 9BB.

Norsca service at Wimbledon

Norsca bathroom toiletries are again being provided by Elida Gibbs for the players at the All England Lawn Tennis Championships. Last year Norsca is said to have "scored a hit" in the women's dressing rooms and this year the service is being extended to the gentlemen players. *Elida Gibbs Ltd, PO Box DY, Portman Square, London, W1A 4DY.*

Accolade to race for Nicholas

Nicholas Laboratories are to sponsor the "Accolade", named after the energising drink for sportsmen, in this year's Three Peaks Yacht Race. Along with the Azores and Back Yacht Race, the Three Peaks is the big event in this year's yachting calendar. With over 350 miles of sailing and at least 50 miles of hiking, which includes the climbing of the highest mountains in Wales, England and Scotland—Snowdon, Scafell Pike and Ben Nevis, the race will be a gruelling and arduous test of sportsmanship. The tough conditions are bound to have an effect on Australian skipper Chris West and his crew so it seems appropriate for Accolade to sponsor the yacht. And as Nicholas Laboratories have their roots firmly on Australian soil, the link seems natural.

Originally devised by mountaineer Bill Tilman, who disappeared during a voyage to Antarctica last year, the Three Peaks Race is now in its third year and is being sponsored by the *Daily Telegraph*. At 24 feet in length, the "Accolade", formerly known as the "Superachilles", will be the smallest yacht ever entered in the event and yet it is currently the fastest in the fleet of entrants. The race begins at Barmouth on June 16 and is expected to last approximately five and a half days finishing, without rest stops, at Fort William on June 21. *Nicholas Laboratories Ltd, PO Box 17, 225 Bath Road, Slough SL1 4AU.*

Molinard offers

Molinard's 1oz de luxe atomiser sprays of Habanita and Rafale will be on sale for £2.95 (normally £5.50) throughout the summer. Habanita talc will be reduced to £1.25 (from £2). *Distributors: Frangere Ltd, PO Box 201, School Brow, Warrington, Cheshire WA1 2BT.*

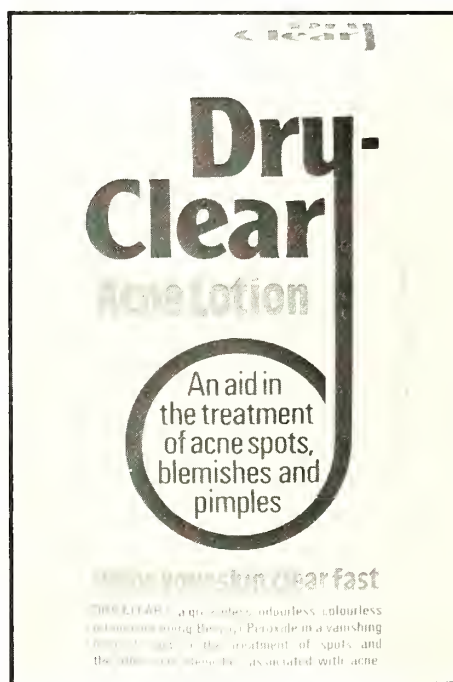
Sortilege gifts

During June to September, purchasers of any item in the Sortilege range will receive a free gift of a Sortilege talc ball. In October, the talc ball will be replaced by a cosmetic bag as the free gift. *Eylure Ltd, Grange Industrial Estate, Llan-frechfa Way, Cwmbran, Gwent.*

Dry Clear support topped up by ICC

Advertising starts this month for the new acne lotion from ICC, Dry Clear—and the campaign is being strengthened above the original plan due to the success of the sell-in. It is ICC's biggest launch for 10 years.

Dry Clear, containing 5 per cent w/w benzoyl peroxide, comes in 30 ml squeeze packs (£1.10) and is being promoted as an aid in the treatment of acne spots, blemishes and pimples. Press advertising includes a range of teenage magazines, and four Sunday and four daily newspapers. Television coverage starts in the autumn in Trident, plus Anglia and



Harlech (late additions), with 15- and 30-second spots. The total campaign will be worth over £200,000 during the first year of the launch. Earlier plans for radio advertising have been cancelled because USA experience indicates that "demonstration" advertising is most effective.

The introductory trade bonus (one free with six, three free with 12) ends on June 29. A standard display outer contains six packs. *International Chemical Co, 11 Chenies Street, London WC1.*

Mono range extends

The new range of cosmetics from Madeleine-Mono is only available through selected outlets at the moment. The company have just introduced a cleansing cream (£3.75), a non-oily eye make-up remover (£2.50), Arabian Lights face powder in five shades (£5-£6) and Butterfly Wings—a range of eyeshadow trio's (£5.50). *Madeleine Mono, 62 Margaret Street, London W1N 7JF.*

COUNTERPOINTS

Slow release insecticide from Sorex

To complement their range of household insecticides Sorex have introduced a slow release fly killer in a controllable cassette (£1.49). Containing dichlorvos, the cassette is said to give up to four months' protection from flying and crawling insects including flies, wasps, moths, beetles, spiders and cockroaches.

Sorex slow release fly killer is suitable for areas up to 1,400 cu ft—for maximum efficiency use half open for areas 850-1,000 cu ft. *Sorex Ltd, Trading Estate, St. Michaels Road, Widnes, Cheshire.*

New Era's campaign

New Era Laboratories Ltd are starting a £150,000 advertising campaign for their biochemic remedies, Hymosa and Tiger Balm. Full page advertisements for biochemics (including Nervone and Elasto) will appear in the national Press including the *Daily Express*, *Daily Mail*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Mirror* and the *Sun*. Space has also been booked in the health magazines including *Here's Health* and *Health Now*. The advertisements will run until April 1980.

Support for the Hymosa skincare range will be full page advertisements in leading women's magazines including *Woman's Journal* and *Woman and Home* from July to April 1980, in addition to advertising in *Here's Health* and *Health Now*.

A poster campaign in the north west this month is supporting Tiger Balm and will be repeated in the north east for two months from December. The poster campaign will cost £15,000. *New Era Laboratories Ltd, 39 Wales Farm Road, London, W3 6XH.*

Merocet now GSL

Merocet gargle and mouthwash is now classified as a GSL product say *Merrell division, Richardson Merrell Ltd, 20 Queensmere, Slough, Berks SL1 1YY.*

Can combs

Can combs are the latest addition to the novelty combs available "from John". Can shaped, they are printed to reproduce Pepsi, 7 Up, Whites lemonade and Unigate containers. Both the Whites and Unigate combs link up with television promotions and are printed with "I'm a secret lemonade drinker" and "Watch out, watch out, there's a Humphrey about" catch phrases. All the combs in this series have a colourful cord and are packed in individual see-through plastic sleeves in bags of 50 assorted combs (£12.50 plus VAT). *John R. Associates, 49 High St., Bushey, Herts.*



PRESCRIPTION SPECIALITIES

Urokinase for pulmonary embolism

Abbott Laboratories Ltd are about to introduce Abbokinase for use in the treatment of pulmonary embolism. It is the first tissue-culture urokinase to be available in the UK. Previously urokinase, a protein produced by the kidneys, could only be extracted from large amounts of human urine; Abbokinase is produced more efficiently from kidney cells grown in tissue culture.

Urokinase converts plasminogen to plasmin, a proteolytic enzyme that breaks down fibrin into small peptide molecules which are then dispersed into the blood stream. Although at present indicated for use only in pulmonary embolism, research suggests that it may be potentially useful in deep vein thrombosis and myocardial infarction.

A specialised distribution service will be operated by Vestric Ltd to hospitals only. As the product has a shelf life of two years and costs £99.75 trade per vial, distribution will be monitored carefully. A 60-page booklet on its use, and an audio-visual programme on thrombolytic therapy will be available in July. *Abbott Laboratories Ltd, Queensborough, Kent.*

Talpen forte syrup

Talpen syrup forte containing the equivalent of talampicillin hydrochloride 250 mg in 5 ml will be available from June 18

Vestric promotions for July

Vestric promotions for July are: All Clear shampoo; Arrid; Body Mist; Bran Slim; Carefree Panty Shields; Chap Stick; Clean & Clear; Colgate dental cream; Curity Snugglers; Cuticura soap; Cuticura talc; Diocalm; Ear plugs; Fastidia; Germolene; Gillette disposable razors, Gillette hair colourant; Hall's Hudnut products including Efferdent, Poly Colour, Poly Tint and Poly Blonde; Kleenex Chiefs; Kotex Soft 'n Sure; Maclean's toothpaste; Marzine; Mum roll-on and refill; New Skin; Optrex Eye Dew; Pharmaton Face Clean, Pharmaton hair tonic, Pharmaton Nail Fit, Pharmaton Royal Bath, Pharmaton Skin Activator; Poli-Grip and Super Poli-Grip; Radox bath salts; Sucron; Vespré press-on towels; Wet Ones cleansing wipes. *Vestric Ltd, Chapel Street, Runcorn, Cheshire.*

in 100 ml pack (£3.48 trade). *Beecham Research Laboratories, Beecham House, Great West Road, Brentford, Middlesex.*

Change in Septex ingredients

The active constituents of Septex No 1 cream are now: Cetrimide 0.5 per cent, zinc oxide 7.78 per cent and oleic acid 1 per cent; No 2 cream: zinc oxide 7.4 per cent, boric acid 5.15 per cent, sulphathiazole 4.94 per cent. The prices of both these items have increased to £1.45 and £1.80 (trade) respectively. *H. N. Norton & Co Ltd, 133a Shawbridge Street, Glasgow G43 100.*

Ulcedal to change distributor

Boehringer Ingelheim Ltd say that they will be discontinuing the supply of Ulcedal capsules at the end of June 1979, when stocks will be exhausted. However, Tillotts Laboratories hope to resume the supply of Ulcedal in due course. *Boehringer Ingelheim Ltd, Southern Industrial Estate, Bracknell, Berks.*

Lepetit introduce compliance packs

Lepetit Pharmaceuticals have rationalised their packs of Rifadin and Rifinah (June 2, p836) into patient compliance packs. Although the existing packs are to be discontinued, the distributors, Farillon Ltd, and wholesalers have stocks which are expected to last several months. *Distributed by Farillon Ltd, Bryant Avenue, Romford RM3 0PJ.*



Are you giving
customers a good Snug?

You are if you're stocking Snug.

Because Snug denture cushions keep false teeth firmly, reliably and comfortably in place.

So that denture wearers can laugh (and talk, and eat) in perfect confidence.

Snug isn't a messy powder or paste, doesn't need renewing daily, and is economical to use.

It's made from hygienic dental material similar to that used for making dentures.

No wonder more and more denture wearers are relying on Snug.

Snug is being widely advertised in national newspapers. The more of it you stock and display the more you'll sell.

So check your stocks now. Immediate deliveries can be obtained from your usual wholesaler.

SNUG IS AVAILABLE IN ONE AND TWO CUSHION PACKS.



We've cleared dandruff Now for the rest of

We're so sure of All Clear's success that we're putting £1,200,000 behind it in its first year.



We've got good reason to be confident, just look at the test market results.

67% repeat purchase; highest ever for a new Elida brand.

11.8% brand share gained at launch.

62% of people who tried it actually said it was as effective as the best anti-dandruff shampoo.

And users of the leading anti-dandruff shampoo found All Clear at least as good; over a third preferred it.

Why? Because it answers a long-neglected customer need; it not only clears dandruff but also comes in three kinds for dry, normal and greasy hair.

So now we're going national.

This should turn a few heads. And a few shoulders too!

ALL CLEAR

Dandruff in the South. The country.



Neutrogena introduce new acne soap

Neutrogena are introducing a new acne soap (£0.75). Based on the pure formula of their normal soap, it has in addition two special agents to gently cleanse and degrease troubled teenage complexions.

The new soap will be supported by heavyweight teenage Press advertising and sampling to dermatologists and doctors. Neutrogena see the product as an extension to their existing scented and unscented soap business by providing a positive "first aid" for acne, yet retaining the mild cleansing action of a pure soap base. *Neutrogena (UK) Ltd, Distributors Farillon Ltd, Bryant Avenue, Romford, Essex.*

Matey goes west

The Matey Wild West show was Nicholas Laboratories' contribution to the Great Children's Party in Hyde Park, the major event in this International Year of the Child. And the show got Royal interest with the Duke of Edinburgh asking after the red indians and Princess Anne sympathising with a shot settler who "died"—right in a pile of horse droppings.

The show—linked to Nicholas's Matey children's bubble bath—had a dozen cowboys from the Remuda Western Club out in Bromley, Kent; a covered wagon which travelled from way out west along the M4 near Slough; a gunfight at the OK Corral and a showdown between the Remuda bunch and young dudes from the crowd; and games just like the real cowboys play in Texas, such as throwing the horse-shoe.

The Nicholas marketing boys and girls from toiletries division, headed by product marketing manager and acting sheriff John Alway, gave away 20,000 Matey badges and cases of shampoo and bubble bath as prizes. The Matey Wild West show featured in several national newspapers, and on television and radio programmes and, commented John Alway: "It was all tremendous fun and lots of kids from all over Britain will remember Matey and Nicholas for a long time to come". *Nicholas Laboratories Ltd, 225 Bath Road, Slough, Berks.*

Wella contract for Olympics

Wella International have signed an exclusive agreement with the organising committee for the 1980 Moscow Olympics to fit the Olympic villages with full hairdressing facilities. The agreement covers a supply of hair cosmetics, equip-

ment and Welonda furniture and continues the tradition that was started for the Olympic Games in Mexico and Munich. At the same time, Wella International demonstrators are helping to train Soviet hairdressers. *Wella (Great Britain) Ltd, Basingstoke, Hants.*

More Tudor advertising

Tudor Photographic's television advertising support for dealers will have a

further burst throughout July, and national Press promotion featuring "Buy the film—get the book free" will run until the August Bank Holiday. Regional and local Press advertisements will feature Tudor dealers' names and addresses appearing at peak holiday weekends throughout the year. Marketing manager Mr John Locke, comments "This year's campaign is geared to further increase the consumer's awareness of our dealers and the services they provide." *Tudor Photographic, 30 Oxgate Lane Industrial Estate, London NW2 7HN.*

First quarter's promotions show collapse

Across the board of the 22 product categories measured monthly by M. S. Surveys and Promotional Services the first quarter of this year indicated a slump averaging 35 per cent in activity compared with the same period in 1978.

The abysmal weather and widespread industrial strikes could have had little to do with it because promotions are planned months in advance. A spokesman for M. S. Surveys commented: "The monthly pattern was a 30 per cent downturn in January, 43 per cent in February, and 30 per cent in March.

The main element in the collapse of promotional vigour appears to have taken place in the "tailor made" promotions run by the large supermarkets which are advertised in the newspapers. According to M. S. Surveys, the percentage drop was 61 per cent. To this figure must be added those short-term promotions offered by the supermarkets and particularly the drug stores which simply do not get picked up by the analysts at M. S. Surveys because they are so local and so brief in duration.

But if one turns away from the all-products average and isolates those of direct concern to chemists, the decline in promotional activity is a comparatively "thriving" 13.6 per cent:

	1st Qtr	
	1979	1978
Baby foods	19	33
Toiletries	381	440
Cosmetics	67	89
Hair preparations and shampoos	85	78
All medicinal	6	6
	558	646

These figures are obtained by adding one month's promotions to the others

and therefore do not constitute new promotions though they do enter into the totals. Promotions run by Woolworths and Boots are included.

Overall for the quarter there were 2,628 promotions running for the 22 categories of products. The top seven promotional techniques are here listed along with the relevant figures for 1978:

	1st Qtr (Numerical)	
	1979	1978
Reduced price offer	1198	1538
Coupon	408	495
Self liquidator	361	375
Free mail-in	253	223
Contest	168	178
Multi-pack	99	116
Give-away	86	126

As these first quarter figures show, the chemist group of products was relatively favoured in promotional campaigns and there is sound reason to believe that this will continue for an indefinite period. Well towards the end of last year the main food manufacturers told the major supermarket buyers that "the game was up" regarding further inroads into profit margins in order to finance the price war let loose in the high streets by the ending of stamps by Tesco in the middle of 1977.

These warnings were privately much blunter than they appeared in published speeches. They were given urgent meaning by the realisation on the part of the supermarket chiefs that food was now a static ("no growth") part of their business.

The upshot is that supermarket floor layouts are now being reorganised to give greater display space to other product categories, a popular one is often health and beauty. More intensified promotional activity inside the supermarkets for the chemist group of products should be expected as time goes by.

Goes through a shop like a dose of salts.



That's just what Andrews has been doing since 1894.
Which is how it became the name to remember for
stomach upsets.

And why it is now the dominant brand leader in the
stomach upsets market.

So be sure to add the Andrews Sparkle to your profits.

Andrews is a registered trade mark

SterlingHealth

Sharpe summer idea from Gillette

Just like the temperature, razor blade sales rise in the summer—but some retailers can be caught unawares say Gillette who have come up with the “perfect answer for them and their customers.” A specially designed compact dispenser filled with a comprehensive range of blades for all needs with the additional attraction of a free holiday planner for the consumer.

The planner features a diary for route planning, sightseeing, day planning and reminders on itinerary, useful hints, check lists for items to take away and things to do before leaving, currency rates, postcard and shopping lists and useful numbers to remember. The dispenser, available through chemists’ wholesalers, contains ten packs each of Contour and Gillette GII cartridges, ten of Platinum blades, six packs of Techmatic and 12 three-razor packs of disposables. *Gillette UK Ltd, Great West Road, Isleworth, Middlesex.*



turquoise and snow beige lustre; sea shimmer grey and gilded bronze lustre; shiny grey and silver plum lustre.

Revlon have also created new matching lip and nail colours to go with tanned complexions. The matching sets are being offered to the consumer for £1.75 (normal price for both products £2.45). Creme nail enamel and moisture creme lipstick are available together in summer tan or summer coral and extra crystalline nail enamel and frosted lipstick are available in summer tan frost and summer coral frost. The offer is also available for two existing matching lip and nail duos; hot pink chocolate and shimmery sand. *Revlon International, 86 Brook Street, London W1Y 2BA.*

Maybelline's new moisture whips

Maybelline have introduced, what they describe as, a new kind of lipstick. Moisture whip (£0.73) is a soft, creamy, moisturising formula which the company says is crumble proof and won't therefore dissolve to a sticky mess after a couple of applications. It is available in 20 shades.

Also recently introduced by Maybelline are three new shades of cream-on eye shadow (£0.82) in silky green, iced amethyst and mandarin cream. *Plough (UK) Ltd, Penarth Street, London SE15 1TR.*

Low calorie Hunts

Hunts have launched a three-quarter litre range of low calorie mixer drinks in three top selling flavours—tonic, bitter lemon and American ginger ale.

Announcing the launch, Michael Hayden, Hunts' marketing manager, said: “Chemists are selling more and more drinks, particularly the larger size bottle. Many adults tend to reject ordinary low calorie soft drinks because the taste is not sufficiently sophisticated for their palate. By drinking a low calorie mixer, they have the dual benefit of weight-watching while drinking something they enjoy.”

Total sales of take-home mixers now amount to £45 million, with as much as 75 per cent low calorie products drunk straight. *Beecham Foods, Beecham House, Great West Road, Brentford, Middlesex.*

Christmas shows

Andre Philippe's Christmas trade shows will be held at the Albany Hotel, Glasgow June 11-14; Hendon Hall Hotel, London June 25-29; Hotel Metropole, Brighton July 8-11 and at the Selles trade show in Cottingham, North Humberside, July 8-10.

Eylure will be at the Central Hotel, Glasgow, June 10-13; Hendon Hall Hotel, London June 26-28, Piccadilly Hotel, Manchester July 2-4, Metropole Hotel, Brighton July 8-11, Dragonara Hotel, Bristol July 17-18.

J&T Gorny: Central Hotel, Glasgow June 10-13; Majestic Hotel, Harrogate June 17-20; Winter Gardens, Brighton July 8-11.

Richards & Appleby: Central Hotel, Glasgow, June 10-13, Majestic Hotel, Harrogate June 17-20; Hendon Hall Hotel, London June 26-28; Piccadilly Hotel, Manchester July 2-4; Metropole Hotel, Brighton July 8-11; Five Bridges Hotel, Gateshead July 17-19.

ON TV NEXT WEEK

Ln—London; M—Midlands; Lc—Lancashire; Y—Yorkshire; Sc—Scotland; WW—Wales and West, So—South; NE—North-east; A—Anglia, U—Ulster; We—Westward; B—Border; G—Grampian; E—Eireann, CI—Channel Island.

Agia motor cameras: All areas
Alka Seltzer: All areas except A

Anadin: All areas

Anbesol: NE

Anne French: E

Bisodol: Lc, So

Crest: Ln, M, Y, Sc, NE, U, We, B, G, CI

Head and Shoulders: All except E

Keystone cameras: M, Lc, Y, NE

Piz Buin: All areas

Silvikrin shampoo: All except E

Wet Ones: All areas

Wilkinson Sword scissors: Ln

Wondra: Y, NE

Keystone with built-in flash

Keystone Camera Corporation have developed three new pocket cameras with built-in flash. The Keystone Pocket Everflash TM cameras are said to be a substantial improvement over previous cameras because the flash range is doubled indoors (4-20 feet) when using ASA 400 film. The “extended range” capability also allows pictures to be taken outdoors in lower light conditions. The flash has a recycling speed of four seconds with fresh batteries.

The Everflash TM has a flash speed of 1/1000 seconds, and the shutter is preset at 1/125 seconds. The three models are: XR 108 (about £20) with a 23mm, f/8 two element lens; XR 308 2X tele lens (about £30) a 46mm colour corrected f/8 doublet lens and a normal 23mm f/8 doublet lens; XR 408 electric-eye has a CdS meter and adjusts the aperture automatically from f/8 to f/22 depending upon lighting. All three cameras feature interlocks to prevent double-exposing of photos and built-in lens covers. *Keystone Camera (UK) Ltd, King Street, Leicester LE9 5NT.*

Revlon's eyes

A new eye make-up product from Revlon combines a creme-on shadow and Great Lustre eye gloss in a double-ended wand called Colour Duet (£1.35). This will be available in six colour combinations: soft blue and silver blue lustre; warm brown snow and snow frost lustre; frostiest white and ice blue lustre; icy

Not to be sneezed at.



No two colds are alike. Which is why we extended the Coldrex range to provide a different remedy for every kind of cold symptom.

After heavy, and memorable, television advertising last winter Coldrex sales were lifted by more than 60%.

This year, increased national television support will put paid to more colds than ever before.

Coldrex is definitely not to be sneezed at.

Coldrex is a registered trade mark

SterlingHealth

COUNTERPOINTS

Tender Touch: the transition from commodity to brand

Invent something new, brand it, and if it is successful you have a nothing but a head start on those competitors who will inevitably turn it into a multi-brand product—soon to be followed by own labels and perhaps almost an anonymous “commodity” status in the long term. But how often in recent years has a “commodity” been branded, then promoted with the full weight of modern marketing expertise? Well, at least once, according to Alan Fryer, marketing director of Smith & Nephew Ltd, who has overseen an operation to cause Tender Touch cotton wools to do the unusual, if not the impossible. And the transformation is one of considerable interest to the chemist because research—confirmed by sales—proves that the public sees the pharmacy as the natural outlet for this particular “commodity”, branded or not.

Whenever possible Smith & Nephew Associated Companies adopt a “vertical” approach to their markets, and in the case of surgical dressings this means control from production of raw cotton through to the manufactured article. Prior to 1975 they had a substantial share of the market with medical wools and a branded nursery wool, Panda. But in 1975 they saw an opportunity to expand their share, and the market, through branding. So in September of that year Smith & Nephew purchased the established Tender Touch brand from Johnson & Johnson. They decided to retain the pink and blue packaging because, despite the low (12-15 per cent) market share, the brand clearly had cosmetic leanings and mother-and-baby appeal. It also had another essential ingredient for success—a fuller range of products than any competitor. And since each product has its own particular use, the consumer can be persuaded to make several purchases from the same, identifiable, range.

Product shares

Rolls of cotton wool account for just under half the market value, but they are the declining sector; larger sizes are used in baby care and the smaller rolls are mainly used around the house. Pleats, a fifth of the market, are regarded as a “halfway house” between economy and convenience. But the high-flyers are cotton wool balls (“puffs” in the Tender Touch range) which account for a growing one-third of sterling sales and are highly convenient for cosmetic use. Later additions to the range have been larger packs of coloured puffs (already selling as well as the white) and cleansing huds.

Having the brand, S&N set about put-

ting it on the map with competitive pricing, trade incentives, display activity and—for the first time—consumer promotions. The opening on-pack promotion was a £5 holiday voucher, followed by offers of books and teddy bears, the latter achieving over 2,000 redemptions.

So much for branding and awareness, but could even greater promotional support, plus heavyweight advertising, actually expand the market itself as well as the brand share? To find out, S&N decided on a test run in the Border television area.

A 30-second commercial was produced, designed to appeal to both the cosmetic and baby care purchasing sectors. It showed the cleaning of an old oil painting—a portrait—with the grime of the ages being removed from the face area using moist cotton wool: the voice-over stressed the message “for the most delicate complexions”, thus drawing attention to the soft and gentle attributes of the brand (benefits which research had shown figure strongly in the consumer’s mind).

Market increase

Sandra Lawes, brand manager for consumer wools (S&N see this market as distinct from hospital and BPC wools), reports that the campaign’s effect was everything the company hoped for. Trade response was very good and two independent before-and-after surveys, Nielsen and BMRB, showed conclusively that Tender Touch wools were not a commodity in the consumers’ eyes. Sales, distribution and brand share “shot up” says Mrs Lawes—“In fact, it was a classic case history in marketing terms.” But the real lesson came in the market increase—up by a third according to the research.

To repeat this success on a national basis would be expensive of course (a peak 30-second spot on Border at £155 might cost the advertiser £5,100 in London). Equally, the industry would need to be prepared to satisfy a much larger market, involving expansion at all stages in the production and marketing chain.

But if television is for the long term, Tender Touch advertising has continued strongly in other media. Last autumn a Viking soft toy pattern sheet promotion was advertised in the women’s Press for the first time, and has resulted in over 27,000 redemptions so far (they are still coming in). This spring the on-pack offer is a nursery mobile kit for two proofs of purchase, backed by even more advertising to women. All point-of-sale material is now designed to a “space-saver” concept, with the chemist



particularly in mind, and is adaptable to tie in with each of the promotions.

Currently the consumer wool market is worth something over £12m, plus £3m in buds, according to S&N. Taking 1976 as 100, by 1978 the sterling index had reached 160, representing no less than 35 per cent in volume growth—a significant change which S&N claim to be due in no small measure to Tender Touch activity. “It is more buoyant than any other toiletries market”, says Alan Fryer.

Chemists’ advantage

This should please the chemist, who has around 70 per cent of the market in value terms. So far the brand stimulus has not led supermarkets and grocers to change their attitude: they still prefer to treat wools as a service commodity, supplying their customers’ needs through own-label. But S&N believe they have proved it is possible to create new needs and new customers through branding. Which must be good for the retailer prepared to promote the brand as well as the “commodity”.

Bubble packaging

Pilloflex, a new polyethylene bubble material, is claimed to be ideal for packaging fragile items such as cosmetics, mail order goods, chemicals and so on. It comes in reel form up to a standard maximum width of 1,500mm which can be slit into required sizes, cut into sheets or heat-sealed into bags. Reels 2,400mm wide can be supplied to special order. *St Regis Coating & Laminating, Knight Road, Strood, Kent.*

Still biggest with the little ones.



The baby syrup market is one of the few baby product areas that is still showing steady volume growth.

Continuous advertising this year in mother and baby publications will keep Delrosa in the forefront.

And to make sure that Delrosa stays ahead of the market, and the competition, we are continuing our unique Babysavers promotion and hospital sampling to 550,000 new mothers each year.

Delrosa is a registered trade mark.

SterlingHealth

A useful way of identifying management potential

by Ray Jeffery, Inbucon Management Consultants

A sure way of stopping a confident decisive manager in his tracks is to ask him the following: How satisfied are you with your company's methods of selecting people for entry or promotion to supervisory or managerial positions? How satisfied are you with your company's procedures for monitoring the validity of your current selection and appraisal schemes?

The answer usually implies that there is inevitably a hit and miss element in staff selection; "gut reaction" is still a major guide. Need this be so?

Several companies in the pharmaceutical industry have adopted the procedure of using "assessment centres" in selecting and promoting key personnel.

Research has shown that is a surer method of identifying managerial aptitude and it is being used in Britain by Inbucon Management Consultants.

One pharmaceutical company, for example, has 48 district managers, each

Another exercise takes the form of group discussion in which no chairman or leader is appointed. The candidates are asked to reach a solution to a problem after each has had a chance to make a presentation to the group. Others include fact-finding exercises, written communication exercises and simulations of interviews with subordinates.

A panel of assessors, having been trained by Inbucon to observe behaviour, evaluates their performance. Candidates are rated on those factors which are considered important in the prospective jobs, such as management skills, sensitivity, effectiveness in communicating and performance under stress.

"We identified several high potential candidates, who because of reasons of conflict with their immediate supervisors or quiet personality styles, were regarded as low potential managers in the past," says the personnel director. "Thus, individuals who were being under-utilised will now be given an opportunity to develop and use their assessed managerial skills." Several minority and female candidates were found to have significant managerial potential."

"Individuals, who for various reasons believed themselves to have high management potential, were assessed as being low in potential. Because of the nature of the assessment centre data, candidates could see why they 'failed' the potential test and subsequently accepted the 'evidence'. Under normal selection procedures, this would have been quite impractical and unacceptable to them. Representatives who were judged to have varying degrees of deficiency were told what they needed to do to improve their management skills."

To help them, the company has developed a training resources guide to be used by district managers in working with representatives. Explains a spokesman, "We have found that in showing company commitment to individual growth and development, there has been a significant positive impact on staff morale."

The personnel director of another pharmaceutical company emphasises that his firm is using the Inbucon method of assessment as a development tool rather than for straightforward management selection. He states: "We're using the assessment centre as a means whereby sales people can come in and learn more about their strengths and weaknesses in several areas, some of which apply to managerial skills. But we point out that attending a centre and doing well, doesn't necessarily give a person an inside track for promotion, nor does it set back someone who performs poorly. It simply

gives the salesperson a better insight and enables us to help them get on a development programme with the relevant divisional manager." Here assessment centre participation is strictly voluntary. Inbucon's role is to train carefully selected managers from the client's own staff to become assessors. In this way, the client company becomes self-sufficient in the design and administration of its own selection procedures.

"To develop an assessment centre, we must first determine which factors are critical to the success of a job. They must be described accurately. We will then prepare the programme of exercises which will measure these critical factors and train assessors to administer them and observe behaviour," explains Len Brooks, Inbucon's managing director. "We plan the administration of the assessment centre and provide follow-up arrangements." The first two or three assessment centres are carried out under Inbucon's guidance.

Under-utilised individuals will be given opportunity to develop

One pharmaceutical company found that there was a bonus by training management as assessors. Says the personnel director: "These individuals have reported significant benefits in terms of sharpened observational skills, ability to conduct meaningful performance appraisals with subordinates and insight into personal strengths and weaknesses. The assessment centre programme has further demonstrated to these individuals the inappropriateness of traditional 'gut-level' assessment and the rampant biases associated with traditional selection procedures."

There is substantial evidence supporting a positive relationship between assessment centre findings and subsequent management performance. The classic validity study performed by American Telephone & Telegraph involved numbers of new management trainees who were put through an assessment centre. The results were not used immediately or made available to operating managers. Some years later the results of the assessment centre were compared with the trainees' progress within the company as measured by such criteria as salary level, number of promotions, and performance ratings. A high positive relationship was found.

Thus, the assessment centre has proved to be an extremely useful tool for the identification of management potential and development needs. The objective assessment of management potential, the realism of the assessment procedures used, the personal development suggestions arising from assessment data, and the invaluable training afforded to those individuals who serve as assessors have all contributed to its success in the selection and development of management with the skills to succeed.

Not necessarily an inside track for promotion

of whom has approximately 10 area representatives reporting to him. Altogether, 72 candidates were processed through the assessment centre. In the next few months a further 40 candidates are to be selected.

Initially, candidates were selected through nomination by current district managers. However, as the programme develops, the company plans to utilise self-nomination almost exclusively. The programme was designed originally to help in the selection of sales representatives who could become district sales managers.

Broadly speaking, an assessment centre is a practical approach to simulating real life management situations. It is a method, not a place. Applicants are observed when tackling a series of exercises and situations, either individually or in groups. These exercises are designed by Inbucon to expose the behaviour which has been identified as being important to the success of specific jobs or management in general.

An assessment centre usually evaluates 12 candidates at a time and is held away from the place of work. For two or three days, they take part in a variety of tests, exercises and simulations. A typical exercise is the "in-tray". Candidates are given a large number of memoranda and correspondence based on actual operating problems, large and small. Without access to any other help, they must set priorities and make decisions to the best of their ability.

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Protection of tenants during rent reviews

by Paul Hilden*

Although the law gives protection to those who lease business premises when the lease comes to an end, the position is a lot more complex for those leaseholders who have a break clause in their agreement. Depending on when the lease of the business premises was originally created, there are usually clauses stating that after three, five or seven years from the date of the commencement of the lease, the rent will be reviewed (which in recent times means increased).

One hears of owners of businesses at the period of the break being asked such a high rent that if they in fact paid it, they could well be driven out of business. What then is the protection, if any, available to the business tenant? Unfortunately, unlike the situation at the end of a lease, there is no clear cut answer and much will depend on the terms of the lease itself. If it was entered into when business premises were hard to come by, it will be found that the terms will be extremely harsh as far as the business tenant is concerned and his only redress may be to pay up. However, many leases provide that in the event of a disagreement between the landlord and the tenant, the matter can be settled by arbitration.

Often the clause will provide for an arbitrator to be appointed by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. It would be advisable in cases where a rent increase is disputed to employ a chartered surveyor to represent you since what is an appropriate rent at any given time for business premises can depend on so many factors.

What is the position if a rent is finally fixed that the tenant still feels he is unable to pay? Well, if he goes and the building or premises remain unoccupied in spite of the landlord's attempts to re-let, the tenant can be liable for the rent for the remainder of the term of the lease. Here again, however, much will depend on the wording of the lease.

If the lease gives the tenant power to assign the lease, he may be able to find another tenant to take over. Such a clause might say that he can only assign the lease with the landlord's permission but the law implies that such "permission must not unreasonably be withheld", whether those words are used in the lease or not.

One final point. Most leases provide for the landlords to give notice by a specified time if it is intended to ask for

a rent increase at the appropriate "break" period. If the landlord is late in giving the notice then in spite of the fact that at one time this defeated his claim to an increase, the position is now different and if due to an oversight or clerical error the landlord misses the date, his claim is not necessarily barred. It will be seen that because of the complications, parties to a lease should seek professional advice well before a "break" date for rent review is due.

Schedule 11 claims

An employer, even if he only has a handful of employees and does not recognise any trade union, can in fact be taken by a trade union to the Central Arbitration Committee and under certain conditions be obliged to either give his employees a pay increase or grant them certain terms and conditions of employment which they do not at present enjoy.

How does this come about? Under Schedule 11 of the Employment Protection Act, if there is a national agreement (or a district agreement) between an employer's association and a trade union, then, if you as an employer (even if you are not affiliated or are not a member of the employer's association) employ workers of the same description as those covered by the national agreement (or district agreement) you can be asked to give to those workers the terms and conditions of the agreement. If you refuse, the trade union can take you to the Central Arbitration Committee and ask it to award to your workers the conditions concerned.

Even if there is no national or district agreement, if a trade union has a member in your employment, it can ask you to apply to your workers the same general level of the terms and conditions of employment for workers of the same description that are enjoyed in the district. At the committee you can, of course, argue that whilst you might not give the same pay, you make up for it with, say, extra holidays or a pension scheme but if you cannot do this and it is clear that you are paying either below the nationally agreed level or the level in the district, an award will be made and this will become part of your employee's terms and conditions of employment.

A limited number of employments in special circumstances are exempt from the above rules but most employments are covered. Since any awards made do

not count against pay policy limits, the number of cases now listed under this law have increased tenfold over the past two years and it is a matter that must be borne in mind.

A creditor's liability

At one time, the majority of credit transactions occurred when a supplier or manufacturer granted certain amounts of credit to the customer and there were in fact only two parties involved and any legal liability in relation to the goods could be sorted out between them.

Nowadays, in so many transactions where credit is involved there are often three or more parties—manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, finance houses, hire purchase companies, factors and the whole scene is much more complex if a dispute should arise over, say, some goods supplied to a customer. As a result of legislation, if the customer has a legal cause of action against a supplier (eg for breach of contract or for misrepresentation) but credit for the purchase was provided by someone else, then under certain conditions, the customer can sue either the supplier or house), or both.

The conditions are (a) that the cash price of the goods is more than £30 but less than £10,000 (b) that the credit granted is less than £5,000 and (c) that the credit is granted to an individual, a self-employed trader or a partnership (not limited companies). If the finance house only, is sued by the customer but the fault in the goods can be laid fairly and squarely at the feet of the supplier, then the finance house can claim indemnity from the supplier.

A point to note is that for the above arrangements to apply, the credit must be given as a result of an arrangement between the credit grantor and the finance house. A customer who arranges his own credit will not be able to take advantage of this joint liability arrangement. A finance house, as between itself and the customer, cannot contract out of the protections given.

Employing students

Some employers take on students to assist during the vacation periods. Such employment might only last a few weeks and yet the employer could easily be involved in tax complications if he does not follow the special procedure that is available for such employments which simplify the whole tax exercise.

Usually, the amount of money paid to the student over the period will be less than the tax free personal allowance to which he is entitled (now nearly £1,000). In these cases a special form for student employees can be obtained from the Inland Revenue and this can be returned to the tax office together with a signed statement by the student concerned. This arrangement then permits the employer not to deduct any tax from payments he might make to the student concerned.

*Pen name of a barrister

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A new Pharmacy Bill?

by A. G. Mervyn Madge, FPS

There is talk of a new Pharmacy Bill. It is some 25 years since the last and naturally in the archives of the Pharmaceutical Society are all the facts relating to necessary amendments in promoting a new Bill. Much experience has been gained in the intervening period and we trust the end result will be to the benefit of all concerned in pharmacy.

The path is a tortuous one, requiring consultation with many parties and bodies before the approval of Parliament. The final product may not be the same as originally expected.

Today, Council is composed of 21 elected members and three nominated by the Privy Council. However, if we look at the political atmosphere there is the tendency to more State control, interference or intervention. There is the rising power of consumer or lay pressure groups.

A new Act could see a change in representation on Council, and the discussions with government that followed the Merrison report for doctors point the way. We find insistence that chief medical officers have four seats by right on the General Medical Council. Will there not be pressure from the Department of Health for the chief pharmacist to sit on Council, perhaps with Wales and Scotland as well? Might not there be pressure from the universities, teaching hospitals, or consumer groups for inclusion. Could there be an excuse for enlarging Council because the number of members has remained static despite the greatly increased number of pharmacists? We pharmacists may not like it but Parliament would have the final say in the matter.

Fitness to practise

No doubt the section of most interest would be the disciplinary powers of the Society. There have been changes in the responsibility of the pharmacist, and the attitude of the public in expecting high standards (encouraged by the Press at times, in spotlighting the faults and misdemeanours of some pharmacists).

Consider the following. Is it right or in the public interest that pharmacists, mentally unstable, or in various stages of senility, could be in charge of a pharmacy? Or that a pharmacist could be verging on blindness, though in possession of all his other faculties, and unable to read a prescription clearly, having to have it read to him for checking purposes? There is obviously the human side to such cases and the Benevolent Fund of the Society could help where financial hardship may occur. At present, the Society has no powers to act.

Is there not a case for a properly constituted "health" committee with guaranteed safeguards to examine such

cases and recommend that a pharmacist should not practise due to mental or physical inability, with a review at stated intervals? By all means let the pharmacist keep his certificate for sentimental reasons on condition he does not practise. The Society cannot do this at the moment—a registered person with a certificate has the right to practise.

Could that not be better for alcoholics instead of them appearing before the Statutory Committee for misconduct and being struck off, or given virtually a suspended sentence—the case deferred for 12 months and reconsidered with evidence of good character.

Is it right that a pharmacist who has left pharmacy and pursued another calling for 40 years should be able to return to practise because the Society has no power to stop him? Should there not be a rehabilitation course for such cases?

Disciplinary fines

Cases before the Statutory Committee cost the Society money. Is there a case for issuing fines or claiming costs? Should there be a reform of the Statutory Committee? It consists of a chairman appointed by the Privy Council and having "practical legal experience" (usually a person of eminence in the legal profession) and five members appointed by the Society's Council. Although the members are all pharmacists, according to the 1954 Pharmacy Act they need not be. The only stipulation is that there must be a pharmacist resident in Scotland.

With the increasing proportion of employee pharmacists is there not a case for an employee on the Statutory Committee? Might not lady pharmacists consider representation?

The Statutory Committee is independent, and not there to carry out the wishes of Council as so many pharmacists seem to think. The Committee makes decisions by a majority vote of members present—a quorum is three—with the chairman having a casting vote if necessary. His consent must be obtained for removal of a name from the Register, and all decisions must be made in public by the chairman.

Any member can make a complaint to the secretary of the Society or to the secretary of the Statutory Committee. If to the Society's secretary it is usually passed to the law department, and in turn, if the matter is considered serious, and not frivolous, is passed to either the Ethics or Law Committees. Here, all relevant facts are discussed and the decision may be one of no action, reprimand, warning, or referral to the Statutory Committee. This is then con-

sidered by the chairman who decides if the complaint is within the jurisdiction of the Committee. If he does not consider the case sufficiently serious and can be disposed of without an inquiry, he can after consultation with other members do so. Thus, there is a long sifting period before a case actually comes before the Committee.

If a complaint is made direct to the secretary of the Statutory Committee a report must be submitted to the chairman with the above procedure, by-passing the Ethics and Law Committees. If an inquiry is to be held, the Society lays the evidence whether the original complaint has been made by the Society or not.

At one time the concept of misconduct seemed to embrace only the "professional" activities of the pharmacist. However, in a case where a pharmacist supplied arms to the IRA it was argued at the time it had nothing to do with the professional side of a pharmacist's life. From then a wider view seems to have been taken that misconduct included any act which threw discredit on the profession. A much broader definition.

Another interesting development has been the pleadings of defending lawyers or barristers in court. Naturally they have every right to do their best for their clients. Hence the increasing pleas in mitigation of sentence that their client was unlike other members of the public in that he would have to face a second trial by his disciplinary body. Hence lighter than "normal" sentences have been given in quite a few cases. This in turn, however limits the scope of the Statutory Committee in that it can only consider the relevance of the actual sentence passed.

More complications

There will be further complications following the decision in a recent case, when Sir Gordon Willmer, Committee chairman, said he must take note of the powers of the Criminal Court Act 1973, and "nemo bis vexari debet"—that "no one should be harassed twice". This could have far-reaching consequences not only for pharmacy but all professions. It may be that more cases will proceed through the Ethics rather than the Law Committee, or action will be taken where a fine has been inflicted instead of a sentence.

Much will be said regarding the decision, and it may be that alteration of the powers of the Statutory Committee will be considered in the next Pharmacy Bill. One thing seems certain, it will lead to much discussion and argument not only in pharmacy but in Parliament itself.

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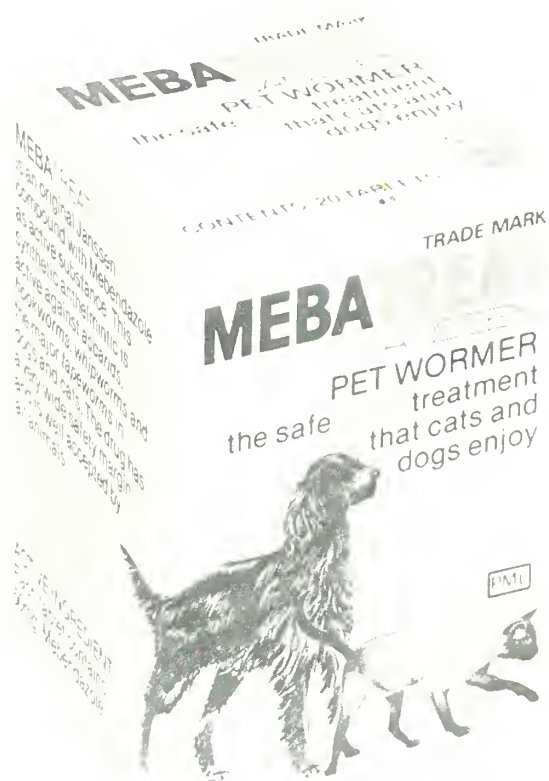
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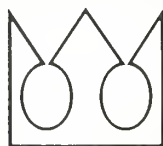
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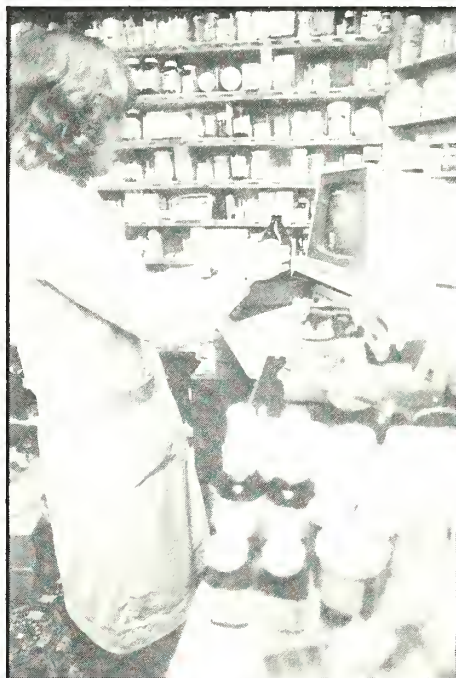
Development of a computer system for the pharmacy

by Richard Pawson

Most chemists wholesalers have now at least dipped a toe into the muddy waters of "computerisation" of their customers, extending the facilities of their main frame computers to explore management possibilities for independent retail pharmacies. All sorts of trial are currently in progress, but few independents have taken the bull by the horns themselves. One who has is Mr Idris Hughes of Harpenden, Hertfordshire, and his solo efforts have attracted the interest of even the computer buffs.

A report on Mr Hughes' experiences appears in the June issue of Practical Computing and the article that follows is based on it with the publisher's permission. C&D readers are asked to bear in mind that it was written for a (pharmaceutically) lay audience. We have appended a glossary of terminology and a short postscript for pharmacists by Mr Hughes, Mr Hughes and the author, Mr Pawson, are expected to be demonstrating the equipment at the NPA Show at St. Albans, June 16-17.

Illustration courtesy Practical Computing



If, like me, you have ever had difficulty in reading the hand-written directions on a prescription dispensed by a chemist, you will be pleased to learn that there is a solution to the problem.

Venture into a small pharmacy in Hertfordshire and you may have a pleasant surprise. Affixed to the prescribed bottle of cough mixture, or whatever, will be a neatly-printed label containing all the requisite information, including your name, the drug dosage, directions, and even the date and time of dispensing.

Time halved

Inquire further and you will be told that the whole rubric was produced on a computer and in half the time it could have been hand-written.

With around 10,000 High Street pharmacies in this country, dealing with a monthly average of 2,700 prescriptions each, dispensing is big business. Add to this the enormous problems of buying and controlling upwards of 2,000 stock lines on a tight budget and retail pharmacy becomes a widespread application which entreats computerisation.

Although it is generally acknowledged that Britain has one of the finest and most advanced pharmaceutical services in the world, the associated authorities have been slow to design or recommend a suitably system. They are not unaware that attenuating the terrific burden of administration placed on the average pharmacist's shoulders would leave him with more time for his trained function, helping the general public by matching drugs to their ailments.

Thus, for some years, there has been a captive market, waiting for someone to combine a working experience of the dispensary problems with a good knowledge of computer capabilities.

Self-taught

Enter Idris Hughes. Owner of two pharmacies, with four close relatives in the same business, Mr Hughes is known as being something of an entrepreneur. Previous enterprises include the successful establishment of a local drug-buying co-operative.

Little more than a year ago he decided to teach himself the fundamentals of computing. Having only a limited technical background, he had to learn Basic from scratch with the aid of books and tutorial tapes. To gain programming experience he purchased a Pet, self-containment and low-cost being the chief deciding factors.

It was not long before Mr Hughes realised the possibility of using the Pet in his dispensary.

A small number of independent pharmacists employ full-time typists to produce the labels. While that is undoubtedly fast, and results in a high standard of presentation, labour costs are prohibitive to all but the larger operations. There is also an ergonomic factor—in many dispensaries space is at a premium and any personnel not involved directly in making-up a prescription are hard to justify.

His pharmacy being no exception, Mr Hughes concluded that this solution was not feasible. Instead, he obtained a small printer and set about developing

a programme to print labels from abbreviated information typed-in on the Pet keyboard.

Feedback from his customers was promising. Most preferred the new, large-format labels to the previous hand-written ones, though Mr Hughes recalls that a handful of his clientele, not being versed in such esoteric concepts as ASCII characters, mistook the zero (printed 0) in the pharmacy telephone number for an eight. Though there was never any danger from this—all quantities specified in the directions are written in words—ironically a routine had to be altered to replace the zero with a letter "O".

It occurred to Mr Hughes that disappearing out of the door with every customer was a labelful of valuable information, generated on his own computer. Why not, then, write a routine to capture this data—specifically the drug name, quantity and date—and store it on cassette tape by means of the inbuilt Pet cassette deck?

This could be retrieved at any time, processed to identify trends in prescriptions and, more advantageous, to form the basis of a stock control and re-order scheme. Such a data capture routine was implemented successfully, within a relatively short time.

With a system which was growing rapidly into a powerful and adaptable package, it was possible that other pharmacists would be interested. Even at that stage Mr Hughes was receiving telephone calls and visits from colleagues who had heard of his ideas. Could the package be marketed on a commercial basis? More commitment was necessary.

The first move was to contact the manufacturers of the equipment in use—Commodore for the Pet and Computer Workshop for the PR-40 microprinter used to print the labels.

Evaluation

After outlining his proposals, Mr Hughes negotiated dealer purchase arrangements so that he could provide himself with several systems for development and evaluation work. Having done all the programming himself, the point had then been reached where the software needed to be made foolproof and more efficient in terms of speed and size.

Outside programmers were consulted from time to time and gradually the programme began to look more professional, both in its listing, and more important, in its operation.

Meanwhile, Mr Hughes had been indulging in some market research. A

Continued on p922

Pharmacy computers

Continued from p921

questionnaire mailed to several friends in retail pharmacy was returning some interesting answers. It became apparent that what was needed was not one system, but several, with a range of options to suit different businesses—both their requirements and their budgets.

Working within those constraints, a ladder of systems was envisaged, starting with the original idea of label generation for prescriptions. Optional additions to this would include simple data recovery to give a monthly list of all the items dispensed.

More advanced systems would offer full stock control with re-order reminders and analysis of prescription trends. A number of ancillary functions would also be possible, such as a small payroll program and ledger accounting.

A few careful calculations, based on the amount of information which had to be available instantly to the pharmacist, indicated that the more advanced options necessitate a floppy disc to be incorporated into the system. Mr Hughes prefers to wait for the Commodore 2040 disc to arrive rather than use a compatible disc from another manufacturer.

£1,000 to £3,000

For that and other reasons, a fixed price structure has not yet been announced. Mr Hughes estimates, though, that prices will vary from around £1,000 to £3,000 for a system "fully installed and working", depending on the chosen configuration.

That seems to have met with general approval among those pharmacists who are interested. Bespoke programming will be available for people wanting custom-made or adapted systems.

So what next? Obviously the system must be stringently and exhaustively tried and tested, as must every innovation in the pharmaceutical world, but since Mr Hughes has produced nearly 50,000 labels on his first set of equipment, it appears he is rapidly approaching the point where it can be marketed viably.

The main limitation is time. Since Mr Hughes has financed the enterprise himself, all development work on the system has been in addition to his full-time job as a pharmacist, one which cannot by law be delegated to an unqualified employee.

If he is to be able to devote the necessary time and effort into finalising the software, setting-up a marketing operation in his company and providing the required back-up services, he will need more staff, both to replace his existing functions and assist in the new ones.

All that requires capital and Mr Hughes has been probing the relevant channels to find an outsider willing to

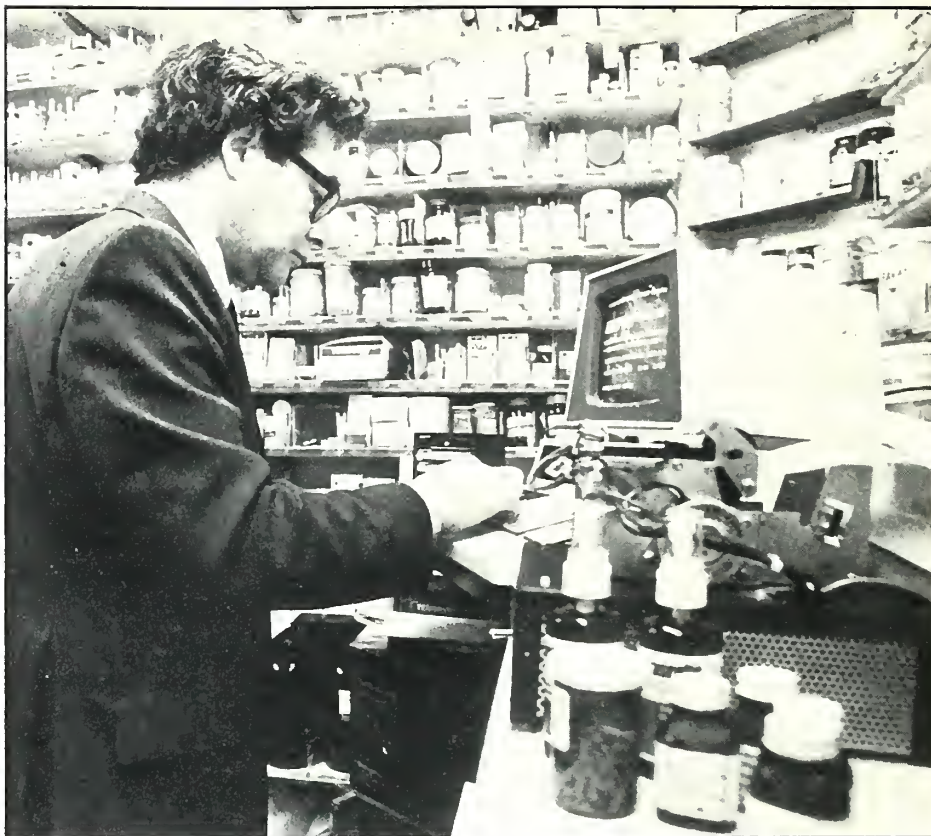


Illustration courtesy Practical Computing

invest the amount required. Fortunately, he is in a better position than many entrepreneurs, having already demonstrated the feasibility of his design and the size of the possible market.

Turning to the details of system, it has changed considerably over the last few months. The Pet, though chosen originally for personal use, fulfills the role of the central processor in the system ideally. The calculator-type keyboard—sometimes regarded as a shortcoming on the 8K machines—has proved to be adequate and robust enough for the somewhat hazardous environment.

The only fault concerns wearing of the keytops, a problem which Commodore apparently has now cured. While 8K of internal memory is sufficient for the labelling and data recovery program, the more complex options which incorporate twin floppy discs will be based on a 32K Pet.

The internal cassette deck is used for storage of the prescription data and while the transfer rate is somewhat slow, the amount of information recorded after each label—the drug name and quantity—is only a few bytes long, hence the delay is no more than two seconds.

Stock control

On the disc-based systems, this form of sequential transaction record will be abandoned. Instead, the information entered via the keyboard to produce labels will be used to adjust directly the quantity in stock of the particular drug.

Each product will have a field of 130 bytes on the disc and this will contain the description and strength of the drug, a price code, supplier code, re-order level, re-order quantity and the volume dispensed in each of the preceding 12 months.

This arrangement has been modelled very closely on a number of existing stock record card systems—another field in which Mr Hughes has been particularly active—to make the computer system easy to install. Thus the pharmacist has instant access to the stock position of any one of his drugs.

At the end of the week or month, another program is used to interpret the figures. The first task is to find all the products which need re-ordering and to list them, along with the appropriate re-order quantities, on the printer—categorised under supplier name.

Quantities analysis


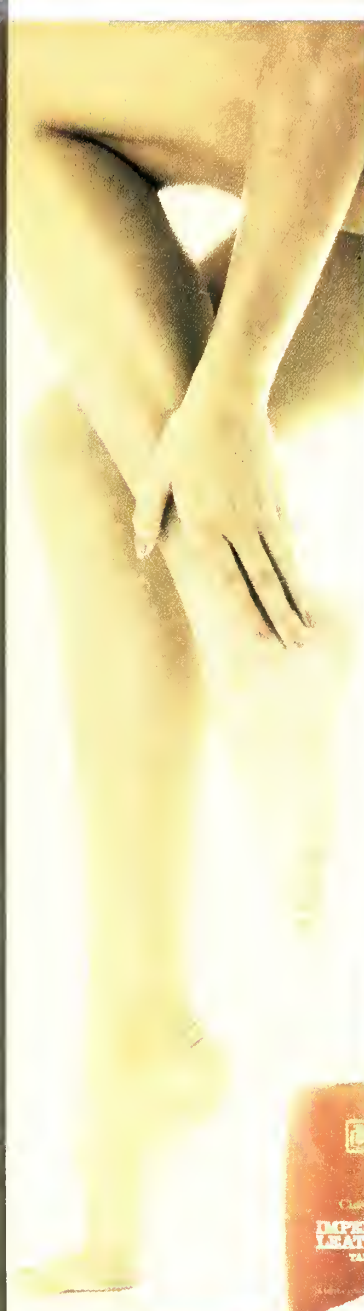
A more ambitious routine would analyse the quantities dispensed over the last 12 months and adjust the re-order quantity, after approval by the pharmacist, according to the trend in prescriptions.

Another very important application of the figures has been impossible previously. Every pharmacy is re-imbursed by the Department of Health and Social Security for the drugs dispensed against NHS prescriptions. The amount of remuneration is based on fixed rates and is calculated by the DHSS from the used prescription forms.

Many pharmacists have been concerned, faced as they are with stock replacement costs which can increase by 20 per cent per annum, that there is no practicable way of checking on the accuracy of this calculated figure. A system such as Mr Hughes' which can give an indication of the expected value of payment, with no extra effort, must surely be welcome.

So much for tape and disc; the other

Continued on p927



EVERY BODY USES TALC. SO WHY SPEND £100,000 ON ADVERTISING?



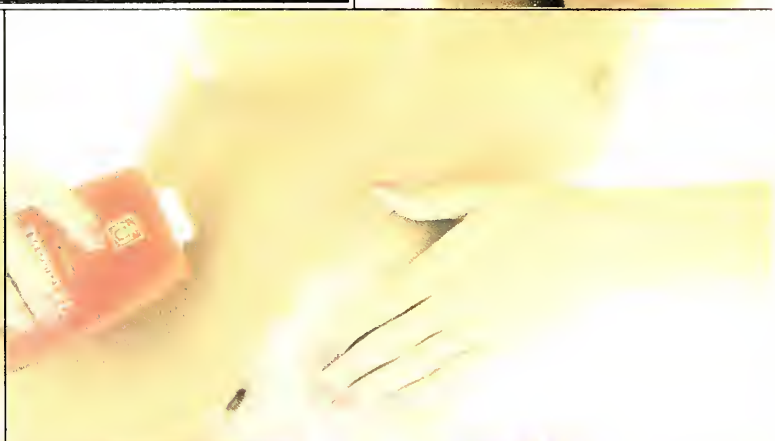
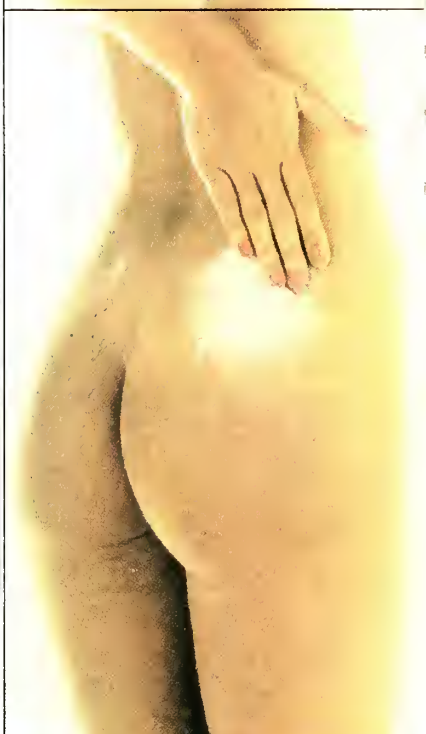
Talc has always sold steadily, with just a sprinkling of advertising.

Understandable.

Everyone likes pampering themselves. But, because many housewives forget to put it on their shopping lists it's not always on the bathroom shelf.

That's why Cussons Imperial Leather Talc will be investing heavily in women's press this summer.

Reminding 14 million ladies to let all the family enjoy a little luxury every day. So you can, as well.



A NEW CAMPAIGN FROM

send customers flooding in..

**give you profits to get your
teeth into...**

and plenty of money to burn.

Listerine sales grew by 21% volume in 1978. In fact, they reached a retail value of £1,000,000 for the first time.

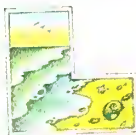
Now we're putting even more support behind the brand.

Including: Black & White ads in leading national dailies; a series of humorous colour cards on the tube.

And to help you with your stock handling, Listerine is now packed in smaller outer sizes. Making it even easier for you to regularly top up. So make sure Listerine is by the toothpastes and brushes in your store.

Sales will be enough

LISTERINE THAT'LL...



Listerine Mouthwash and a story of how things might have been.

We have all read how King Canute was persuaded by flattering courtiers that he might even rule the waves. And how he set his throne upon the shore to instruct them in their error.

But the simple truth is that Canute suffered terribly from bad breath. And his courtiers, suffering even more, hoped this massive dose of ozone would ease their problem. And his. Happily nowadays a daily gargle with Listerine Antiseptic Mouthwash kills the germs that can cause bad breath. Something toothpaste and brush alone cannot.

Perhaps your breath sometimes tells the wrong story?

Listerine Mouthwash
It's enough to take your breath away.



Listerine Mouthwash and a story of how things might have been.

Dracula, distressed by his protruding teeth, suddenly discovered his breath was a little off too! Girls he kissed on the lips were filled with horror! Alas, he had to find another way of expressing his affection. The way he got his teeth into love affairs gave 'necking' a new meaning.

Had Listerine Antiseptic Mouthwash been available in Transylvania, he might not have gone batty. For a daily gargle with Listerine kills the germs that can cause bad breath. Something toothpaste and brush alone cannot.

But we really shouldn't hammer him too much.

Listerine Mouthwash
It's enough to take your breath away.



Listerine Mouthwash and a story of how things might have been.

The Great Fire of London, so it's told, began in a bakery where a dozing apprentice carelessly let loaves catch fire. But truthfully, the lad was over-attentive, for seeing them ablaze he tried to blow them out. But his breath, uncontrolled by Listerine Antiseptic Mouthwash, caused the fire to roar. If only he had tried a daily gargle with Listerine which kills the germs that can cause bad breath. Something toothpaste and brush alone cannot. But still the Fire did give the planners an opportunity to create the city of broad streets and airy open spaces we know so well today!

Listerine Mouthwash
It's enough to take your breath away.



to take your breath away.

Now your
customers
can slim...



while your
profits grow.
Lockwoods
new range of
low calorie
carbonates.

Standard carbonates also available: Cola, Lemonade, Bitter Lemon, Orange, Lime Cordial & Lager, Ginger Beer, Shandy, Lemon & Lime.
Telephone: H R Harrison (Brand Manager) 099-67-3851, A J Osborn (Assistant Brand Manager), Smallfield Surrey 3489. Our Main Sales Office, Boston 0205 67000
or the Regional Sales Managers: A W Brine, Wigan 55766, R E Young, Findon, Sussex 2400, J Petrie, Glasgow 041 770 5755, C Athorn, Barnsley 762299, J Cumberworth,
Nottingham 607641, L D Pounder, Hartlepool 72818

Pharmacy computers

Continued from p922

peripheral vital to the operation of the system is the printer. Knowing that the maximum print width needed for the labels would be 4in, Mr Hughes bought a Computer Workshops 40-column PR-40 microprinter after a visit to the Commodore showroom, where one had been linked to a Pet.

Not being compatible with the IEEE peripheral bus, the PR-40 was driven from the Pet 8-bit user port, on which the individual lines can be PEEKed and POKEd according to any desired pattern.

The subroutine to do this was written originally in Basic, an adaptation of the routine listed in the Commodore Pet Users' Club newsletter. Although it worked successfully, it was translated later into 6500 machine code which speeded the operation and left more RAM space for the main programme. In the finished marketable system, printers will be driven from custom-designed interfaces.

Mechanical problems

The printer, however, has been the weak link in the chain. After having produced nearly 50,000 labels over the last seven months, the mechanism is showing signs of wear. Credit where credit is due, though—Mr Hughes' PR-40 has printed an estimated seven million characters with a negligibly small number of errors.

The other main problem is peculiar to using self-adhesive labels. After printing the relevant information, the medium must be advanced clear of the print mechanism to allow the label to be peeled-off from the backing paper. The number of line feeds must be arranged so that the print-head lines-up simultaneously with the top of the next label.

There lies the problem. Although the stationery can be manufactured so that the label height corresponds to an exact number of line feeds, all friction feed printers are prone to a small amount of "creep". It means that after dealing with a few dozen prescriptions, the printing will not be in perfect alignment with the labels and eventually information will be lost from the top or bottom of each label.

While re-alignment is not a particularly difficult operation, Mr Hughes says that it contravenes his original specification of ultra-simple operation, aimed at non-trained personnel. The search for an alternative printer was thus essential. However, the problem is purely a mechanical one and Mr Hughes does not anticipate long delays before a workable solution is reached.

Software for the system is at different stages of readiness. The simple labelling and data capture program, having been used for so long in Mr Hughes' dis-

100 TAB DISTALGESIC

TAKE ONE EVERY FOUR HOURS

J SMITH ESQ

1045 : 16/6/79

*** NEW PHARMACY ***

12, THE MEAD, YORNTOWN TEL: 30676

100ML MERBENTYL SYRUP

THE MEDICINE—SHAKE WELL BEFORE USE

TAKE ONE 5ML SPOONFUL FOUR TIMES A DAY WITH FOOD WHEN REQUIRED

BABY N SMITH

1041 : 16/6/79

NEW PHARMACY, 12, THE MEAD
YORNTOWN, YORKSH. TEL: 30676

The two demonstration labels above are reproduced full size. Mr Hughes expects shortly to install new equipment which will provide better print quality

pensary, has undergone a number of re-writes. Consequently, it is virtually saleable already.

The disc-based programs have reached the detailed specification stage, with several routines perfected, though a large proportion of the coding cannot be performed without the disc.

It is worth looking in more detail at the operation of that program: it entails one or two interesting features. When a prescription is dispensed, the first

entry made on the computer is the customer's name. All inputs have been made fail-safe to avoid wrong entries from hitting "return" by mistake. Following that comes the question: "How many labels for this name?" which obviates the need to re-enter the same name should the prescription contain more than one drug or item.

The next piece of information required is the name and strength of the

concluded on p930

Glossary of terms used in this article

A PET is a small computer produced by Commodore Systems and costing around £600 in its simplest configuration. It is designed for use in a small business, school or even in the home. PET stands for Personal Electronic Transactor.

BASIC is the name of the programming language which the PET understands. Although there are many such languages (Fortran, Algol, etc), BASIC is the easiest to learn and can be used in a wide variety of applications.

6500 Machine Code is another language for use on the PET. It is not so easy to write—but the resulting programme will execute several hundred times faster than BASIC!

ASCII (pronounced "Ask-y") characters are a set of 64 numbers, letters and symbols understood by a computer. They can be seen on the keyboard of most machines.

A floppy disc is a system for storing data on a magnetic medium. The floppy disc itself looks like one of those flexible demonstration records given away in magazines. A floppy disc drive is a mechanism for reading and writing data on the disc while it is spinning round. A floppy disc can store more information and faster than a cassette, but it is considerably more expensive initially.

RAM (random access memory) is the name for that part of a computer used to store the program and associated data. The RAM is split up into Bytes or units of memory each of which may store (typically) one digit or letter of the alphabet. An 8K PET is one that is supplied with 8,000 Bytes of RAM and a 32K PET with 32,000.

The IEEE peripheral bus is a set of wires through which data can flow according to a specific pattern laid down by the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers. Many peripherals (printers, floppy disc drives, etc) will couple directly onto this bus. Others will not and to accommodate these the PET has another input/output port called the 8-bit user port. This can be programmed to transfer data according to any desired pattern by means of two BASIC type statements—PEEK and POKE.

The PR-40 is a small, low cost printer which will accept paper up to 4½in. wide. It uses friction feed which simply grips the paper between two rollers as on a typewriter. As the paper can slip very slightly the system is said to be prone to paper creep. Sprocket and tractor feed printers have sets of pins which go through specially cut holes at the edge of the paper and thus ensure that it doesn't slip.

A word about

Sensodyne is the up-to-the-minute word in oral health. It's a full range of oral hygiene products – toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental floss – designed to help keep teeth and gums clean and healthy.

There are the established Sensodyne Toothbrushes – now the fastest growing toothbrush brand. There's a choice of four to cover all the family's needs: Searcher and Plaque Remover,

two alternative designs for routine adult use – Junior for children – Gentle for people with sensitive teeth and gums.

As a companion to the Gentle toothbrush there's Sensodyne Toothpaste – a special formulation to relieve dental sensitivity.

Now, too, there is Sensodyne Dental Floss – double textured and lightly waxed, so that it spreads well and is easy to handle.

But Sensodyne means more than just a range of products. It also says a lot about quality. Because Sensodyne products are professionally designed and recommended by dentists. And Sensodyne tells you something about promotional support, too. We're putting more advertising



**Sensodyne
Searcher**



**Sensodyne
Gentle**



**Sensodyne
Junior**



**Sensodyne
Plaque
Remover**

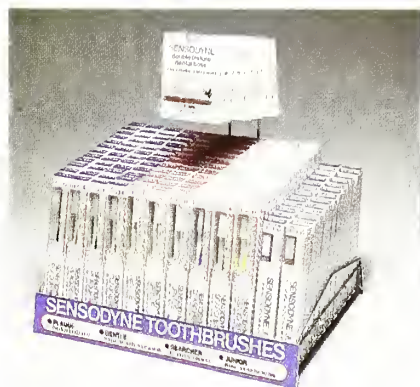
Oral health: Sensodyne

muscle behind the Sensodyne range than ever before. Already, Sensodyne products are getting more dental promotion than any other oral hygiene range – and now we're also advertising the toothbrushes direct to the consumer, with special emphasis on the Searcher. The main target is young housewives and you'll see the ads appearing in magazines like "Woman", "Living" and "Radio Times."

Now about your part in all this. It's a vitally important one, because Sensodyne products are sold mainly through chemist shops – as you'd expect from their quality and pedigree. And we take steps to make it worth your while.

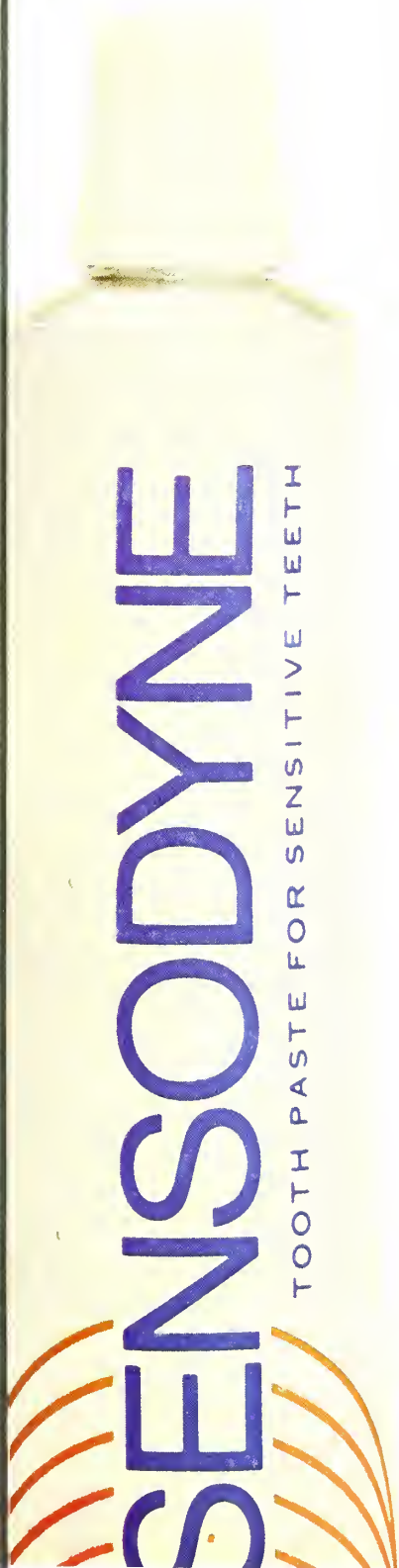
All toothbrushes and floss are on bonus from May to July inclusive – see your Stafford-Miller representative for details of the very special promotional package.

There's a big new display stand – see illustration – holding 12 dozen brushes and a dozen of dental floss.



Sensodyne products are premium priced – that makes them more profitable for you. And their high quality and professional design are right in line with the growing trend towards better oral health. You can put your word behind Sensodyne. We do.

**Quality products for dental health from
STAFFORD-MILLER
Stafford-Miller Ltd.,
Hatfield,
Herts.**



Pharmacy computers

Concluded from p927

drug. A subroutine has been written to allow the names of 30 common medications to be abbreviated, thus saving a considerable amount of time. For example, entering "MO" at this point results in "MOGADON 5MG" being printed on the label. The quantity prescribed also has to be entered.

The subsequent stage is the one which saves the most time and concerns the directions to the patient, which may take three lines of printing. Although special directions may be entered in full, most are in standard forms, such as;

"Take one three times a day" or

"The medicine—shake well before use—"

"Take one 5ML spoonful as directed"

In those cases, all the operator has to

do is enter a number from 1 to 250 according to the message required. A card is mounted above the Pet giving the details of which code corresponds to which directions. Mr Hughes found, however, that after a short period, his staff could remember most of the codes without using the card. The label is displayed on the screen and checked, any way, before it is printed.

Each of the directions was stored originally as an individual string in a DATA statement. That occupied so much RAM space that the system was redesigned so that they could be stored in condensed form, with characters corresponding to commonly-used words and phrases.

This code would then be interpreted and made up into its full string form before printing. An example is the sentence: "Take one, three times a day and two at night" which is stored in the form: "T1, 3D&2N". The saving in space with this system is enormous.

After checking, the whole of the infor-

mation is transferred to the printer along with the time and date—keyed-in only at the start of each day—the name, address and telephone number of the pharmacy and an optional reference number.

The process may appear long-winded but it is true that an untrained operator can produce an entire label in 10-15 seconds using this equipment. That is not only considerably faster than handwriting but produces a far better-presented result.

Utopia?

What of the future? Mr Hughes, as much an innovator as an entrepreneur, has a number of proposals for improving the world of medicine. Computer links in health centres between the doctor's surgery and in-house pharmacy, patient-held prescription record-cards and computer checks for drug incompatibilities are all ideas he mentions with relish.

Who is to say that they are impracticable? In seven months, Mr Hughes has already gone a long way towards achieving his pharmaceutical Utopia.

"Ear Piercing?"

**"IT'S SO EASY AND PROFITABLE
I WISH I'D STARTED
YEARS AGO"**

It was just eight months ago, that I started and last week I did my 150th piercing. Making about £3 profit a time you can see why I wish I'd been doing it for years.

I pierce in the open shop, and it's so quick – faster than making up a prescription. What's really surprising is I've got a lot of competition but it would seem that people prefer to put their trust in piercing at a chemist shop – and not only that – I'm using the safest system in the world – Inverness, the only disposable system.

Inverness
Ear Piercing kits
start at £29.



N.B. The above is based on an actual example. The picture is of an actor

Please send me an Inverness brochure

Please ask a representative to telephone me to arrange a No Obligation demonstration

Name

Address

Telephone No

Louis Marcel Ltd, 12 Bexley Street, Windsor. Tel: Windsor 51336.

A postscript by Idris Hughes

Mr Idris Hughes has added the following postscript at C&D's invitation: "Since Mr Pawson's article was written we have made steady progress and most of our early problems have been solved. We are now studying the needs of pharmacists in different types and sizes of pharmacy because it is important that we take great care to identify their individual requirements. Once this is done, as Mr Pawson reported, we shall be able to offer pharmacists a choice of three or four systems, all of which will be designed to accommodate a particular form of dispensary stock management—and all will provide the label generation facility.

As well as enjoying progress we have had good fortune. We shall be able to accommodate Manorfield Systems (in premises which I can only describe as ideal) close to our existing somewhat over crowded premises. Technical and management services have appeared on our doorstep and I think our bank manager really must have benefited from his Tagamet!

Keep control

I am now devoted to bringing micro-processor technology into the dispensary, with our own system company structured to provide a right system for the job at the right price. The task of harnessing this new technology in the service of our existing technology, pharmacy, will be attempted by every single corporation involved in the pharmaceutical world. But my advice to independent pharmacists is to ensure that the equipment they accept is their own and that activity is controlled either by themselves or at their instructions—not at the wish of others.

It's on the cards you'll save 10% on transport costs.



With your Roadline Discount Card, you'll get really cost-effective distribution from Britain's largest road-based carrier.

Our size means we can collect daily or on demand. Deliver locally and nationally. And take care of everything in between.

And now, dependent upon your traffic volume, we can save you at least 10% on our standard mainland tariff. The heavier your volume of distribution the more you can save.

The discount is available for three months from the date the card is issued. To qualify, you need to spend a minimum of £100 a month. But if you spend less, we could still save you money.

To apply for the card, or for further information, send us the coupon today.

Fill in the coupon now.

To: Roadline UK Limited

137 Finchley Road, Swiss Cottage, London NW3 6JB Tel 01-586 2210

I would like to have further information on Roadline's Discount Card Offer. My Company's expenditure with Roadline would be over £100 a month ☐

My Company's expenditure with Roadline would be less than £100 a month. Please send me further information on Roadline's cost effective services. (tick whichever applicable) ☐

Name

Position

Company

Address

Tel



roadline

moving Britain's goods

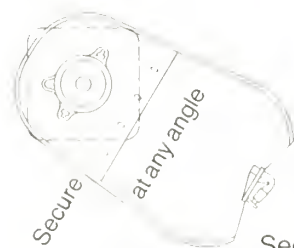
A Member Company of the National Freight Corporation

New for Urostomy!

a new standard of comfort and security

Surgicare™ System 2 saves the patient from the trauma of peeling off adhesive bags. The Stomahesive™ Flange can be left on the skin undisturbed for several days whilst the pouches are replaced as often as necessary.

The non-return valve permits easy access of urine to the lower part of the pouch and efficiently prevents the return of urine to pool in the area of the stoma thus the Stomahesive™ wafer is protected from the breakdown effects of urine and therefore remains secure and leak-free for several days.



Secure closure: easy drainage



SURGICARE

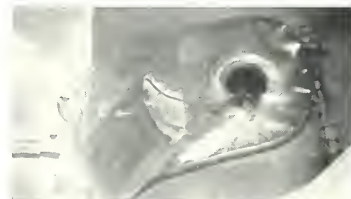
Trademark

System 2

Few innovations in the last decade have contributed as much to stoma management as the introduction of the Stomahesive™ wafer. Even in the most adverse circumstances, the Stomahesive wafer makes possible a leak-free attachment of appliances to the skin thereby providing a unique degree of comfort free of irritation and soreness often associated with ordinary adhesives. Surgicare™ System 2 takes full advantage of these benefits which are particularly evident in the management of urostomies.

generates confidence

During the post-operative week the patient learns firstly how simple it is to replace pouches, then with growing confidence learns how to prepare and apply the Stomahesive™ Flange.



kinder to the skin

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Regal House
Twickenham TW1 3QT
Telephone 01 892 0164
Made in England
Authorised user
of the trademarks

Please send me your illustrated brochure on Surgicare™ System 2 Urostomy management
Address your envelope to Squibb Surgicare Limited, Freeport TK 245, Twickenham TW1 1BR

Name BLOCK CAPITALS

Address

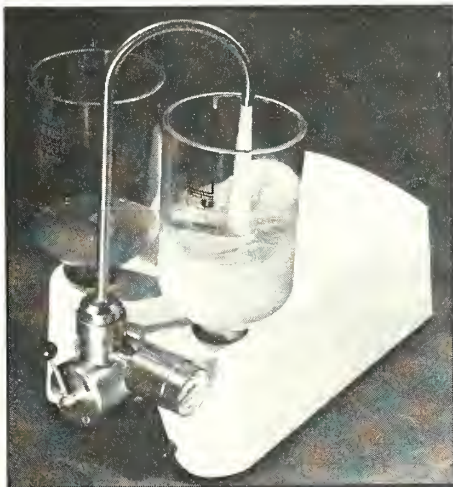
No stamp required



EQUIPMENT

Homogeniser for small scale work

An ultrasonic laboratory homogeniser, model 4, manufactured by Ultrasonics Ltd, is used for preparing emulsions of liquids and dispersions of non-abrasive powders in liquids, creams and pastes. It is claimed to be ideal for development work and for small scale production as several litres of emulsion can be made up in a few minutes. The model 4 comprises an ultrasonic homogenising head, gear pump, two heat-resistant glass vessels, control valve, flexible coupling, electric motor and fibreglass cover. *Ultrasonics Ltd, Otley Road, Shipley, West Yorkshire BD18 2BN.*



Battery driven turntable

A battery-driven display turntable in strong white plastic, and supplied with interchangeable blue or red mats, has been added to the range of show aids by Hallons Ltd. Ideal for creating window or instore attraction to articles displayed upon it, the turntable has two speeds and the direction of rotation can also be reversed. It carries a maximum of 4kg, has a diameter of 190mm, and uses standard torch batteries. *Hallons Ltd, Perry Road, Harlow, Essex. CM18 7PW.*

Index system

A strip index system, claimed to be more compact, lighter and more versatile than strip index folders, has been introduced by Datex Systems Ltd. Their Slipstrip system comes in A3, A4, A5 or pocket-sized ring binders with Rexine or PVC covers. Pages are of tough polyester fitted with clear vinyl channels to hold the card index strips themselves.

Index strips are 90mm or 188mm wide to fit A4 pages in one or two columns and 387mm wide for A3 pages. Strips are supplied in sheets perforated at various depths to take one to nine lines of type. Fully loaded with index strips on both sides, a page is only 1.27mm thick giving a capacity of over 25 pages

or 2250 full width single line index strips in a standard A4 binder.

Inserting or removing one or two index strips is done by hand. To manipulate a whole section of strips, however, Datex supply a magnetic clamp which slides both above and below the strips to be handled so major changes can be made without the fear of strips flying all over the desk. Each page has a clear plastic overlay both to protect strips in position and to allow notes to be made without defacing them.

The pocket-sized A5 system, complete with index strips costs about £8 (plus VAT), the A4 version from about £22 (plus VAT) depending on the style of binder, single or double column layouts. *Datex Systems Ltd, Brandsby, York.*

Smoke detector

A new smoke detector has been introduced by Nu-Swift International Ltd. Previous Nu-Swift detectors are said to


have been highly efficient, but for several reasons it has been decided to change to a photo-electric model, "Swifttec" model 9999 (£20 ex VAT), which operates on the scattered light principle to "see" smoke and trigger early warning of a developing fire. The new detector sounds a loud, sustained alarm, is battery-powered and completely self contained. It is easily installed and up to six detectors can be interconnected for increased protection. *Nu-Swift International Ltd, Elland, West Yorkshire HX5 9DS.*

Vatman mini

The Vatman mini video calculator is a portable 10-digit fast print and display model, fully rechargeable and is supplied complete with adaptor. Among other features are fully independent four-key memory, sigma for auto entry to memory, percentage key and facility for working on display only. *Decimo Ltd, 4 Chobham Street, Luton, Bedfordshire.*

NEW otocerol

... a word
you'll be
hearing
more of ...



... because Otocerol will be introduced to the medical profession in June backed by a campaign in the medical press and by full representative activity.

Otocerol has been shown in a clinical trial¹ to be associated with a significant reduction in the number of ear-syringing operations necessary in general practice and to give an overall higher success rate in the treatment of ear-wax problems than the most widely-prescribed ear-wax remover.

Otocerol will be of considerable interest to general practitioners.

otocerol for the gentle removal of ear-wax

for the gentle removal of ear wax

Reference 1. Jaffe, G and Grimshaw, J. (1978) J. Int. Med. Res. Vol 6 No 3, p 241-244

Full information available on request from:
British Surgical Houses Ltd., 3 Miles Buildings, Bath BA1 2QS.

FACT: DISPLAY IT AND YOU'LL SELL MORE



This year, when sales of Ex-Lax are the highest ever, chemists tell us that the more they display it the more they sell.

Ex-Lax is reliable, pleasant, convenient and trusted. It comes in 3 sizes and Junior (specially formulated for young children) so it suits the entire family, and can be recommended with confidence.

It is continuously advertised in women's magazines and the national press, and stocked by over 95% of all chemists.

Stock Ex-Lax and you'll make money.

Display it and you'll make more.

If you don't believe us, call and we'll give details.

EX-LAX G.S.L.

Ex-Lax Ltd, Fishponds Road, Wokingham, Berkshire. Wokingham (0734) 790345



bp

Today's easy-care system for soft contact lenses.

The Burton Parsons range of soft contact lens solutions have been developed to be the most complete lens care systems available today.

Each product has received the approval of the American F.D.A. and is especially formulated to ensure unsurpassed efficiency and safety.

When you recommend BP contact lens solutions you are recommending the very best.

Further information available from Burton Parsons Chemicals (UK) Ltd., Unit No. 4, Rich Industrial Estate, Crimsott Street, London SE1. Tel: 01-231 2794.

bp for high quality contact lens solutions

Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

Society tests Statutory Committee ruling

The Society is taking a decision by its Statutory Committee chairman to the High Court. This was agreed at the June meeting of the Pharmaceutical Society's Council.

At the April meeting of the Law Committee, attention had been drawn to a decision made by Sir Gordon Willmer to dismiss a complaint of misconduct brought by the Society's Council (*C&D*, March 24, p374). Sir Gordon's decision had been based on his interpretation of Section 13 (3) of the Powers of Criminal Courts Act 1973, under which a tribunal such as the Statutory Committee must disregard a conviction, and the facts leading to a conviction, of an offender who is placed on probation or discharged absolutely or conditionally.

Counsel's opinion had been sought, and counsel had stated firmly that the Society had grounds for taking the decision to the High Court. The Law Committee therefore recommended, and Council agreed, that the necessary steps should be taken.

Patient record cards

The Society has prepared notes for guidance in the use of patient medication record cards, and the notes are to be sent to the National Pharmaceutical Association for inclusion with supplies of the record cards prepared by the NPA. During discussion of the draft guidance notes, Mr Balmford suggested that the sentence, "Pharmacists should normally seek the patient's approval before keeping records", should be substituted by, "It is suggested that pharmacists should advise patients on the keeping of their records". He said that pharmacists should act within their professional judgment as they saw fit in the situation which presented itself.

Mr Dalglish, seconding the proposal, said that it was important that whether a pharmacist kept records should be left to his own discretion and not the patient's. It was part of his professional responsibility. Mr Bannerman pointed out that the words were that the pharmacist should normally seek approval. So as far as he was concerned, that afforded adequate choice of action to the pharmacist. He would infer from those words that pharmacists did not need to tell the patient but as they fundamentally owed a responsibility to the public they should make the public aware of the fact that they were going to take note of the medication being received. Mrs Puxon moved that the sentence should be amended to read: "Pharmacists should normally inform the

patients that records are being kept". It would then be left to the discretion of the pharmacist, she said. The Council agreed to the amendment.

The Society has written to the Department of Health to give the views of the Council on the Department's consultation paper on product liability. The letter says that the Society still holds the view that the proposals drafted in the European Economic Community Directive on product liability are unsuitable for medicinal products, as are the proposals in the Pearson and Law Commission Reports. The Society feels that if the existing requirements under the Medicines Act are not sufficient protection for the public, then specific legislation dealing with medicinal products is needed.

The Council feels that special compensation arrangements are required to protect the public against the harmful effects of medicines, because reliance on the strict liability of producers would not be appropriate or in the public interest. The letter draws attention to the state compensation funds in operation in Sweden and New Zealand and proposed in West Germany; anyone who can prove harm caused by a medicine has a claim on the fund, and it is for the fund's administering authority to decide whether to take action against a producer or distributor.

Commenting on a number of individual paragraphs in the consultation document the letter says that Council accepts that a strict liability system could lead to manufacturers and others listing every possible adverse effect, with the result that patients might then tend not to take their medicines. It also suggests that the pharmacist's professional role should be mentioned in relation to the provision of information for patients on prescribed medicines. The Council's view on vaccines is that if a strict liability system was introduced, then vaccines should be excluded.

Pharmacist as 'producer'

On the definition of "producer", the letter says that the definition would embrace not only the manufacturer and importer but also the pharmacist in general practice and in hospital and the dispensing doctor. Council's view is that a pharmacist should only be regarded as a producer if he actually prepares a medicine, or if he holds himself out to be the producer by putting his name on the product in place of the manufacturer's name. However, in dispensing, the original manufacturer should be

identifiable as the producer if the label bears the brand name of the product or, in the case of a generic product, the name of the manufacturer.

Components and ingredients present considerable evidential difficulty, the letter says. One specific problem is in the hospital pharmaceutical service, where a clinician may request a preparation containing an ingredient only available to chemical standards and not subject to a pharmacopoeial monograph. Most of those points illustrate the need for a state compensation fund, the letter says. Such a fund would avoid over elaborate, cumbersome and inevitably unsatisfactory legislation having to be promulgated in connection with products which act upon biological systems, and which can vary in action from one patient to another, let alone from one product to another.

Year of the Child

Mrs Joyce Gilbert referred to the International Year of the Child and suggested that the Society should be seen to be taking some action. There were stated basic rights for children, the second one of which was adequate nutrition and medical care, and the Society should be doing something in that connection. The president of the Commonwealth Pharmaceutical Association, Mr Albert Howells, had been more successful in persuading his association to take note of the Year of the Child. He had sent out a letter to the members and, in response, New Zealand in particular had agreed to publish each month in their journal throughout the year a subject dealing with children, and they had urged all pharmacists to take part in any local events in that field.

The membership of the Society were calling for action in respect of public relations, and as a profession pharmacists were interested in the health and wellbeing of children. She suggested that publicity might be given to the role of the pharmacist in ensuring safe and effective use of medicines for children. The director of public relations could advise the Press officers to use the local radio and local Press to express such concern on behalf of pharmacy. Such action should be well received by the public. Mr Kerr suggested that to ask pharmacists to take special care during the remainder of the Year of the Child seemed to imply that they had not taken sufficient care in the past, and that would be unfortunate. Mrs Gilbert said there was a great deal of interest in the matter, and in her view the profession would do very well to emphasise its role.

The Society is to encourage support for the pharmacy practice research session at future British Pharmaceutical Conferences. It was reported to the Organisation Committee that eight offers of contributions had been received for the practice research session at the 1979 Conference, and that seven papers had

Continued on p336

Practice Research

Continued from p935

been received for assessment. Astonishment was expressed at the low response compared with the previous two years, especially in the light of the extra guidance to intending contributors that had been provided.

During discussion it was noted that most of the contributions in previous years had been received from schools of pharmacy, and it was suggested that the declining interest might be because such research was not considered to be scientifically acceptable and was not usually associated with career structure. It was also emphasised that practising pharma-

cists who intended to contribute must have access to expertise to ensure sound research methods, and that therefore there must be a link between the applicant and existing research expertise, which was usually found within the academic and hospital environments. The point was made that practising pharmacists probably did not have enough time or funds to engage in such work, and the Committee was reminded that funds were earmarked within Regional Health Authorities for such purposes. The matter is to be referred to the next meeting of heads of schools of pharmacy and placed on the agendas of the next branch secretaries meeting and regional secretaries meeting.

The Society has been informed by the Department of Education and Science that pharmacy will not be included in a list of courses for which supplementary awards can be made for the purchase of special equipment. The Society had made

representations on the matter after it had been raised at a meeting of the heads of schools of pharmacy, who had noted that the Local Education Authority Awards Regulations 1977 allowed for supplementary awards not exceeding £40 for a specified list of courses.

All schools of pharmacy are to be encouraged to arrange for representatives of the Society to speak to students about the profession in general and the preregistration experience requirements in particular. Considering matters arising from the report of the working party on preregistration experience, the Education Committee noted that, while such arrangements were made in most schools already, the British Pharmaceutical Students Association had proposed that a member of Council should be allotted to each school for that purpose. The Committee accepted the spirit of the proposal but felt that speakers offered to schools need not necessarily be members of Council.

Considering a report of a meeting of heads of schools of pharmacy, the Education Committee noted the heads' comments on a proposal in the report of the Society's working party on preregistration experience that there should be discussions between the profession and the schools of pharmacy to increase the involvement of practising pharmacists in the undergraduate course. The heads of schools had been generally in favour of the spirit of the recommendation, and had noted that all schools were to some extent involving pharmacists from the different aspects of practice. However, the heads of schools had indicated that there were several limitations on the development of such a policy, including financial problems and the difficulty of finding appropriate practising pharmacists, particularly from general practice, who had the confidence and ability to teach. The heads of schools had therefore agreed that, while the development should continue, it would of necessity be selective and limited. Council agreed that the view of the heads of schools of pharmacy should be accepted.

Postgraduate courses

The Society is to ask the Department of Health to expedite the issue of the Health Notice which is to be circulated to Regional Health Authorities in England recommending the establishment of regional postgraduate education committees. It was reported to the Education Committee that an inquiry had recently been made to the Department concerning the progress of the Health Notice. It had been explained to the Society that consultations within the Department and with the Treasury had been almost completed at the time the general election had been called. No further action had been taken during the election, and the Department had now received an instruction from the new administration to reduce the number of Health Notices by 30 per cent.

During discussion in Council, Mr

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Hitchings said that in view of the great amount of effort that had been put into the proposed circular by many pharmaceutical organisations, and the considerable importance it would have for the profession, he wished to move that a letter be written to the Department recommending that the Health Notice be issued as soon as possible. Mr Balmford seconded the motion, which was carried.

The Society is to make a number of comments to the Department of Health on an interim edition of Health Building Note number 36, on health centres. Among the points made by the general practice subcommittee on the note were that there should be entrances to the pharmacy both from the street and from within the health centre, and that there should be a separate access from the street for the delivery of goods. The subcommittee also suggested that it was not necessary for the stock room to be secure for the storage of Controlled Drugs, and agreed that the office should be positioned so as to allow it to be used for patient counselling.

The Practice Committee was told that the Department of Health had informed the Society that it was prepared to explore "what may be practical" with regard to recommendation nine in the summary of the proposals of the Clothier committee (the National Joint Committee of the Medical and Pharmaceutical Professions on the dispensing of National Health Service prescriptions in rural areas). Recommendation nine is as follows: "The DHSS should consider

making appropriate provision for an adjustment of the NHS remuneration of a directly affected doctor or pharmacy owner where it would facilitate a change in dispensing arrangements which the NJC considers desirable." Council agreed that the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee should be asked to join the Society in discussions with the Department on recommendation nine.

Supply by nurses

The Society is to seek discussions with PSNC with a view to joint representations being made to the Department of Health, on the supply to patients by nurses of dressings and sundry other items from central sources. Discussing a report of a meeting with representatives of the Association of Area Pharmaceutical Officers, the Practice Committee agreed with the Association's view that the growth of central stores was a threat to general practice pharmacy. The point was made during discussion that if there was sufficient justification for products to be supplied to patients from central stores, then the products ought to be included in the Drug Tariff.

The Society is to seek discussions with government departments on the desirability of additional control on the sale of Cymag. The Law Committee considered, at the request of the Scottish Executive, a letter from the chief constable of the Northern Constabulary in Scotland. It appeared from the letter that the poisoning of salmon in Scottish

rivers was becoming highly organised and profitable, and that pharmacists were experiencing difficulty in identifying genuine trade and business purchasers of Cymag.

The Committee was informed that the Executive accepted that some additional control appeared to be desirable, but felt that the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries could object to the extra workload if control was obtained by an extension of Rule 13 of the Poisons Rules 1978. The Law Committee recommended that the secretary of the Scottish Department, and the head of the Law Department should initiate discussions with the Scottish Home and Health Department and the Home Office, respectively, and prepare recommendations for a course of action to be taken for further consideration by the Committee.

At the meeting of Council, Mr Dalglish felt there were many problems created by the supply of Cymag by agricultural merchants and he hoped that Council would look at the whole question of the supply of Cymag and the problems surrounding it. Mr Stevens said that Section 6 of the Poisons Act 1972 (concerning the local authorities' lists of persons entitled to sell substances in Part II of the Poisons List) would be looked at carefully so far as Cymag was concerned, but there was no intention of looking at the operation of Section 6 as a whole. Mr Dalglish moved by way of amendment that consideration be given to Section 6 of the Act of 1972 at the same time.

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Active ingredients
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Indications
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Dosage and Administration

Adults and Children
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For additional information, or to apply for assistance, write to:
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Clarges House, 6-12 Clarges Street, London W1Y 8DH.

LETTERS

Who should decide?

With reference to George Baxter's interesting article (last week, p882) it is my submission that doctors' divine right to move their surgeries and to move patients on or off medical lists have caused no end of waste since the inception of the NHS.

Every pharmacist and most patients know how the medical "mafia" works to intimidate patients from going to doctors of their choice. In inner city areas, where many doctors prefer not to practise, we all know of swollen medical lists supporting doctors who simply work short office hours protected by the barrier of appointment systems, leaving medical needs to be resolved by the outpatients department or deputising service. We all know how little the modern general practitioner will actually do for a patient. First aid, ear syringing, lancing an abscess, stitching or removing stitches all seem to be a service of a by-gone age.

Unfortunately most people do not realise just what a tight hold the medical profession has over the purse strings of the NHS. Leaving aside the many problems of the hospital service (where

power is being removed gradually from the doctors), in general practice services the doctors reign supreme. Why so, one wonders? Could it be that only doctors get paid by capitation fees so they can neglect their business to dabble in whatever takes their interest?

The only check on medical powers appears to come from the local political appointees to the various committees which administer NHS finance. Very often these appointees are no match for determined doctors when dealing with specific problems and in general local politicians, having made or condoned enough mistakes in spending public money, do not have a leg to stand on when actually attending a meeting. One wonders just how much public money is squandered annually on building clinics, health centres, day centres, etc, in the wrong place to meet vote-catching but ill-considered needs of the community. How many "health centres" are there where doctor places are under utilised, because the doctors did not want to work in them?

Pharmacists' divine right to open where they please are in comparison a straight liability. We have the right to risk our livelihood in operating a service where we judge prescription and counter trade make economic sense, without any certainty that the prescriptions will be there next year. The people, the houses, the shops may remain, but the doctors have gone. I'd gladly forgo my right to

open, but am I going to get any meaningful consultation in providing primary health care from doctor-dominated FPCs?

Brian S. D'Eath
Hornchurch, Essex

STV versus 'X'

Referring to Maxwell Gordon's letter (C&D June 9), it is a classic piece of illogical reasoning to predict that A will happen if influence B is allowed to prevail, and then quote the subsequent occurrence of A as proof that B was responsible.

Surely the possibility that growing apathy, rather than the system of voting, was responsible for the low Council election poll should not be bypassed so quickly. And since anything below a 60 per cent response is apathy in electoral terms, the differences between figures in the 20's and 30's have little statistical relevance.

Perhaps experience has shown members long ago that to them it makes no difference whatsoever who is elected.

Alan Pepler
Minchhead, Somerset

COMING EVENTS

Tuesday, June 19

Leeds Branch, National Pharmaceutical Association,
Golden Lion Hotel, Lower Briggate, Leeds,
at 8 pm. Annual meeting.

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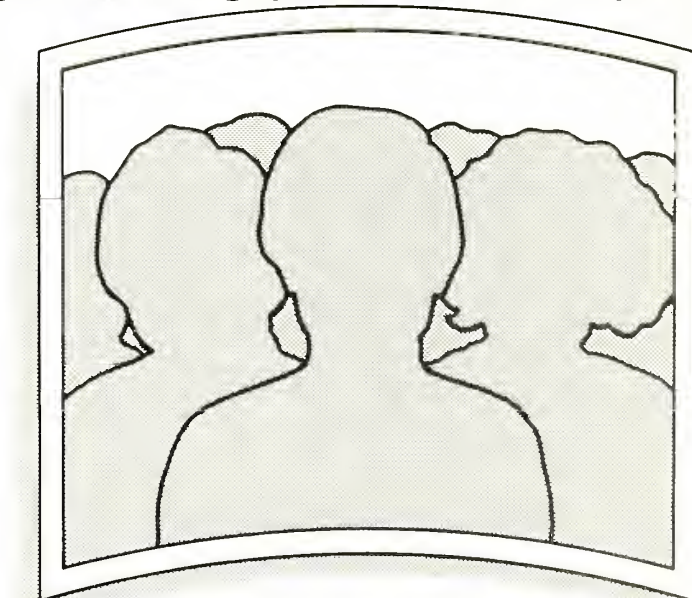
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The Coppertone Display Competition. Plough (UK) Ltd., Penarth Street, London SE15 1TR. This month's competition closes June 30th. Last competition closes August 25th.

Searle acquire new beta-blocker rights

The pharmaceutical/consumer products group of G. D. Searle & Co has acquired rights from C. H. Boehringer Sohn to market bunitrolol, a beta-blocker, in the UK and 68 other countries. The agreement provides Searle with exclusive marketing rights in 48 countries.

Bunitrolol, marketed in Germany, is currently used for treatment of hypertension, angina and arrhythmias. Searle plan to conduct further studies for the treatment of these conditions. They have no date fixed for introduction in the UK as data have still to be submitted to the licensing authorities.

The worldwide market for beta-blockers, which has been estimated at \$400 million in 1978, has been one of the fastest-growing segments of the total pharmaceutical market.

Drop in Ciba-Geigy

Sales of the Ciba-Geigy group of companies amounted to Sw Frs 8,932m (£250m) in 1978 representing a fall of 10 per cent on 1977. Sales of pharmaceuticals at Frs 2,559m were also down by 9 per cent but the annual report states that the group were able to retain their share of the world market. The report points out that government regulations prohibiting the adjustment of prices to local rates of inflation adversely affected the figures. Currency fluctuations also had affected earnings (in Swiss francs) by the "unprecedented figure of approximately Frs 600m in the pharmaceutical division alone." Sales development varied from country to country; the US and UK remained below the market average. Capital expenditure in the division amounted to Frs 120m of which one-third was spent in Switzerland. Helping to broaden the division activities was the recent purchase of Rexall product range in South Africa from Dart Industries Inc, the report mentions.

Metal Box up £2½m

Profit before tax of Metal Box Ltd was £2.45m up at £58.23m for the year ended March 31.

Sir Alex Page, chairman, says that but for the road haulage strike, UK profit, which amounted to £36.51m against £34.34m, would have been £5m more. Overseas profit was £21.89m (£20.44m).

During the year the Ridsen Manufacturing Co, a manufacturer of packaging for cosmetics, was acquired and although it made no contribution in the year under review the chairman sees potential for cosmetic packaging outside the US.

Briefly

Norchem Ltd have plans for a wholesale pharmaceutical warehouse in Bol-

low Road Industrial Estate, Grange-town, Cleveland.

Syntex Corporation of the United States had sales for the three months ended April 30, of \$115.2m—a 14 per cent increase over the third quarter last year. Net income for the quarter was \$16.8m (24 per cent up). Worldwide sales of naproxen were 18 per cent up at \$27.3m for the third quarter.

Contracts for UK-based firms worth in total over £80m have been agreed by **Roche Products Ltd**, for the construction of their new vitamin C plant at Dalry in Ayrshire, plans for which were first announced in October 1978. (C&D, October 21, 1978, p 712). The new plant will have a capacity equal to about one-third of current world demand of vitamin C.

APPOINTMENTS

Fasson UK Ltd: Mr M. Thomas has been appointed northern region supervisor, after representing the company in the west country and the north.

Unicliffe Ltd: Mr N. Gibbons has been appointed marketing manager for slimming products and Mr K. Lewis marketing manager for over-the-counter medicines and toiletries.

Yardley of London Ltd: Mr Brian Godbold has been appointed sales director, Mr Godbold has sixteen years experience with Yardley, progressing through all areas of the sales organisation.

Meyer & Meyer Group: Mr J. Salaman, sales director of Meyer & Meyer marketing Ltd, is leaving to take up senior responsibilities within the Group. Mr J. Fisk has been appointed sales and marketing manager for the British Isles. Both appointments are effective from July 2.

Castlereagh Agencies Ltd: Mr John Kinahan, has been appointed marketing manager, reporting directly to Mr W. Trevor Hanna. Castlereagh Agencies is a leading sales agency company in the north of Ireland. Mr Kinahan was previously with Boots Co where he was more recently involved in directing sales of consumer products in Europe. He represented Northern Ireland in the 1970 Commonwealth Games.

Unichem: Mr David Davidson, MPS, a member of Unichem's midland and north-west regional committee for the past three years has been appointed to the board as a non-executive director. Mr Davidson, the proprietor of pharmacies in Stockton Heath and Frodsham, Cheshire, qualified from the Heriot-Watt School of Pharmacy, Edinburgh in 1965. An active member of the profession, Mr Davidson was chairman of the Dartford Branch of the Pharmaceutical Society 1968-74. Mr David Daman has been promoted to branch manager, Croydon after a period of four years as assistant manager there.

Dearer barbiturates

London, June 13: The principal manufacturers of barbiturates in Britain announced higher prices for all their derivatives during the week. In most cases the rises are of the order of just over 5 per cent and represent the first increase since November 1978 when, unlike this time, phenobarbitone was an exception. Now the base has been slightly reduced but the sodium salt is higher.

Also marked up during the week among pharmaceutical chemicals were ether and bismuth salts. Last year bismuth salts were reduced substantially in price on two occasions; with the recent rise bismuth carbonate remains well under its price of 18 months ago.

Botanicals of North American origin continue to firm as stocks become scarcer awaiting new crops.

Most essential oils remain in the doldrums. Cananga and patchouli were exceptions.

Pharmaceutical chemicals

Amylobarbitone: Less than 100-kg lots £14.89 kg; sodium £16.17.

Bismuth salts: £ per kg.	
carbonate	50-kg 250-kg
salicylate	8.68 8.27
subgallate	9.04 —
subnitrate	11.08 —
	7.07 6.97

Butobarbital: Acid £19.75 kg; sodium £21 kg in 50 kg lots.

Butobarbitone: Less than 100 kg £16.34 per kg.

Cyclobarbitone: Calcium £20.73 kg in 25-kg lots.

Ether: Anaesthetic: BP 2-litre bottle £3.17 each; 1-ton lots in drums from £1.61 in 18-kg drums to £1.43 kg in 130-kg. Solvent, BP from £1,140 metric ton in 16-kg drums to £1,040 in 130 kg.

Ferric ammonium citrate: Brown BP £1.45 kg in 400-kg lots minimum.

Ferrous carbonate: BPC 1959 saccharated £1.50 kg in minimum £500 lots.

Ferric citrate: £3 kg in minimum £500 lots.

Ferrous fumarate: BP £1.40 kg in 500-kg lots minimum.

Ferrous succinate: BP £5 kg in 100-kg lots.

Ferrous sulphate: BP/EP small crystals £650 metric ton; dried £650 metric ton.

Iodolorm: USNF £12.50 kg in 50-kg lots.

Magnesium trisilicate: £0.90 kg in minimum 1,000-kg lot.

Pentobarbitone: Less than 100-kg £20.17 kg; sodium £21.39.

Phenobarbitone: in 50-kg lots £8.76 kg; sodium £9.11.

Potassium acetate: BPC £0.95 kg for minimum £500 order.

Quinalbarbitone: Base and sodium in 25-kg lots £22.94 kg.

Crude drugs

Aloes: Cape £1,075 ton spot; £1,060, cif, Curacao nominally £2,240, cif, no spot.

Balsams: (kg) **Canada:** Firmer at £12.95 spot; £12.65, cif. **Copaiba:** £3.10 spot £2.95, cif. **Peru:** No spot; £9.75, cif. **Tolu:** £5.85 spot.

Benzoin: £199 cwt cif, nominal.

Cinnamon: Seychelles bark £480 metric ton spot; £370 cif, Ceylon quills 4 o's £0.61 lb, featherings £0.173 lb, cif.

Dandelion: Spot £1,950 metric ton spot; £1,785, cif.

Ginger: Cochín £650 metric ton spot; shipment £435, cif. Other sources not quoted.

Hydrastis: Spot £28.30 kg; no cif.

Liquorice root: Chinese £550 metric ton spot £535, cif. Block juice £1,63-£1,90 kg spot.

Sarsaparilla: Jamaican £1,910 metric ton spot; £1,960, cif.

Senega: Canadian £9.95 kg spot, £8.40, cif.

Essential and expressed oils

Cananga: Indonesia £14.50 kg spot £14, cif.

Citronella: Ceylon £3 kg spot and cif, Chinese £3.60 spot and cif.

Geranium: Bourbon £46.50 kg spot; £45.25, cif.

Nutmeg: East Indian £9.25 kg spot; £8.60, cif. English-distilled £18.

Peppermint: (kg) Arvensis—Brazilian £4.55 spot; and cif, Chinese £3.60 spot; £3.45, cif. Piperata—American from £12 spot; £11, cif.

Orange: For shipment, Florida £0.60; Israeli £0.62; Brazilian £0.45, all cif.

Petitgrain: Paraguay no spot; £5.75 kg, cif.

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